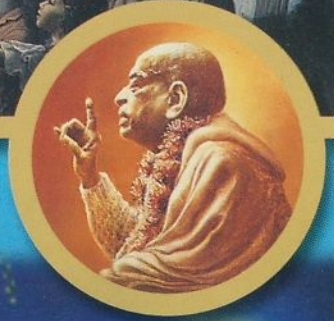


Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

# BACK TO GODHEAD



The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • Sept/Oct 1999 • \$4.00/£4.50



## THE QUEST FOR IMMORTALITY A Utopian Dream?

ALSO:

### MILLENNIUM BUGS

Are You Spiritually Prepared for Disaster?

### THE HUB OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

A Medieval Temple In Kṛṣṇa's Earthly Home

### TANGIBLE PROOF?

Reading and Misreading Old Stones and Bones

### CLEANSING OUR CONSCIOUSNESS

The Purifying Power of Sound



Assisting you in your quest for the Absolute Truth

# Back to Godh

Founded 1944 • Vol. 33, No. 5 • September/October 1999



## FEATURES

### 7 Try to Become Immortal

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains why every human being should be interested in permanent life.

### 14 Qualified by Simplicity

A devotee doesn't require the sophistication of a politician to please Lord Kṛṣṇa.

#### Spiritual Places

### 17 The Hub of the Spiritual World

Before traveling to the West, Śrīla Prabhupāda resided at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple and planned his worldwide movement.

#### The Nine Processes of Devotional Service

### 27 1: HEARING—Cleansing Our Consciousness Through Sound

By hearing spiritual sound, we learn eternal truths, purify our hearts, and connect with the Supreme Lord.

### 31 Tangible Proof?

If we rely on archeology alone to uncover the past, we may be disappointed—or misled.

### 33 The Life of the Funeral

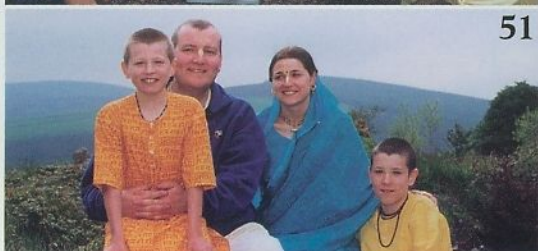
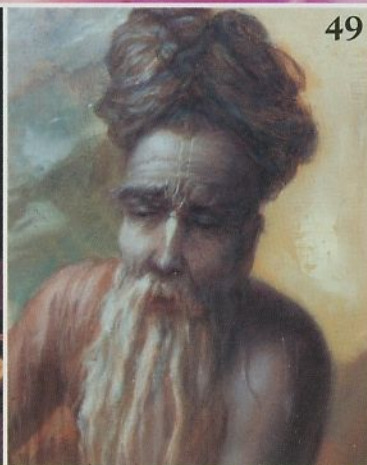
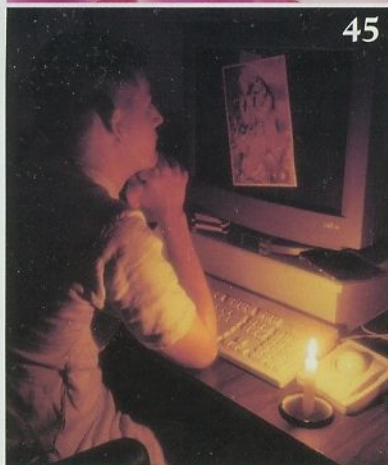
At a Baptist funeral, a Kṛṣṇa devotee considers how to console the aggrieved.

### 35 A Spiritual Perspective on Familial Love

Some considerations on following the dictum that one must give up "false material affection."

### 41 "Mine"

We have many things in our possession, but what do we really own?



# ead

## 45 Millenium Bugs: Are You Ready for Disaster?

Y2K can be an impetus to do more than just stock up on supplies.

### Biography

## 48 Vyāsadeva: The Literary Incarnation of God

The great sage who compiled the Vedas foresaw today's spiritually degenerate condition.

### How I Came to Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

## 51 Elusive Security

He realized that his search for happiness and security had to go beyond the material realm.

## DEPARTMENTS

Letters 4

Q&A on the Gītā 11

Glossary 13

Book Section: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 37

Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out 43

*Independent Insanity*

Gatherings 57

Calendar 58

Centers Around the World 59

From the Editor 62

*A Brief Case for Detachment*

**COVER** The Vedic scriptures reveal that the Supreme Truth is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "the all-attractive one." Though residing in the spiritual world, He is also present in this world in a form we can all see: His Deity in the temple. To read about Kṛṣṇa's Deity known as Dāmodara, see the article beginning on page 17. (Painting by Ananta Śakti Dāsa.)

## WELCOME



With this issue of *Back to Godhead* we start a series of articles on the nine processes of bhakti-yoga, the yoga of connecting to God through service in devotion. Our first article

in the series discusses hearing spiritual sound.

As with any endeavor, spiritual life begins with hearing. To make sure we head in the right direction, we need to hear from authoritative spiritual sources. *Back to Godhead* presents the philosophy and practices taught by Lord Kṛṣṇa and the self-realized souls of the Vedic tradition. Our immediate authority is His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and this magazine.

Each issue of *Back to Godhead* opens with one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures. In this issue, Prabhupāda encourages us to take seriously Lord Kṛṣṇa's instructions on immortality. In "Śrīla Prabhupāda Speaks Out" he shows the folly of thinking we are beyond the control of the laws of nature. And in "Qualified by Simplicity," a disciple recalls how Prabhupāda cleared up a troubling doubt.

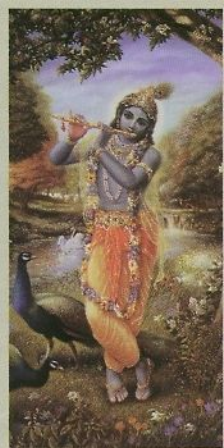
May the bhakti-yoga process of hearing from Śrīla Prabhupāda enlighten and enliven you in your spiritual life.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Nāgarāja Dāsa  
Editor

## OUR PURPOSES

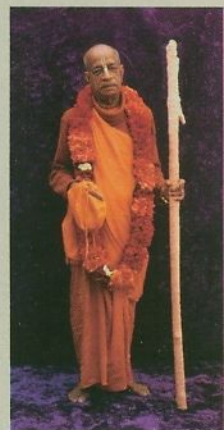
- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and source of all material and spiritual worlds



Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa's most recent incarnation, taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the  
Hare Krishna Movement

## FOUNDER

(under the direction of His Divine Grace  
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda)  
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta  
Swāmī Prabhupāda

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**INDIA: PUBLISHING COORDINATOR** Yudhiṣṭhira Dāsa • **PRODUCTION** Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa • **MARKETING** Raghunātha Dāsa • **ACCOUNTS** Sahadeva Dāsa • **SPECIAL PROJECTS** Ms. Shashi Bhagnari • **SUBSCRIBER SERVICES** Hari-priyā Devī Dāsī, Mañjari Devī Dāsī, Trivikrama Dāsa

**EDITORIAL OFFICES** Send editorial correspondence to BTG, P.O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Phone: (904) 462-7794. Fax: (904) 462-7893. Or BTG, 33 Janki Kutīr, Next to State Bank of Hyderabad, Juhu, Mumbai 400 049, India. Phone: (022) 618-1718. Fax: (022) 618-4827. E-mail: editors@com.bbt.se

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** *Back to Godhead* is published six times a year. For a one-year subscription send \$24 to Back to Godhead, P.O. Box 255, Sandy Ridge, NC 27046, USA. Or call toll-free: 1-800-800-3284. In Canada call our 800 number or send \$20.95 Canadian.

For subscriptions outside the US and Canada add \$3. Payment in US funds (payable on a US bank) must accompany your order.

In the UK send £18.50 to Bhaktivedanta Books Limited, P.O. Box 324, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 1NB, England.

In South Africa send R240 to Back to Godhead, P.O. Box 56003, Chatsworth 4030, South Africa.

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**PREPRESS/PRINTING** Interprint, Clearwater, Florida, USA

© 1999 The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International. All rights reserved. (Trustee for The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust: Jayādvaīta Swāmī.) *Back to Godhead* (ISSN 0005-3643, USPS 604-170) is published bi-monthly (six times a year) for \$24 per year by Back To Godhead, 18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615. Periodicals postage paid at Alachua, Florida, and additional mailing offices.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Back to Godhead, P.O. Box 255, Sandy Ridge, NC 27046.

# Letters

## Women and Service

Regarding the article “What’s a Woman to Do?” by Viśākhā Devī Dāsī [March/April], gender is never a disqualification for engaging in devotional service. All men and all women have the spiritual right to serve the Lord. But do we all have the right to serve in whichever way we desire?

Śrīlā Prabhupāda taught that Kṛṣṇa consciousness means acting according to our constitutional position. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.47), Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, “It is better to engage in one’s own occupation, even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another’s occupation and perform it perfectly. Duties prescribed according to one’s nature are never affected by sinful reactions.”

Arjuna, by constitution, was a *kṣatriya* [warrior]. Kṛṣṇa did not encourage him to act as a *brāhmaṇa* even though he desired to. Similarly, Śrīlā Prabhupāda taught that the occupational service for men and women is different because our psychophysical conditions are different. He never appointed any women as temple president, vice president, GBC [governing body commissioner], or *dikṣā-guru* [initiating guru], nor did he ever suggest they be appointed in the future of ISKCON.

Sītā Devī Dāsī  
Via the Internet

**VIŚĀKHĀ DEVĪ DĀSĪ REPLIES:** To help us understand the scriptures, Śrīlā Prabhupāda gave us his transcendental purports. In his purport to the above verse (Bg. 18.47), Śrīlā Prabhupāda writes, “A man who is by nature attracted to the kind of work done by *sūdras* [laborers] should not artificially claim to be a *brāhmaṇa*, although he may have been born into a *brāhmaṇa* family.” In other words, one’s work is determined by one’s qualities and activities, not by one’s birth.

When directly asked if a woman could be temple president, Śrīlā

Prabhupāda responded, “Yes, why not?” Are we to think that Śrīlā Prabhupāda actually meant “No”? When Śrīlā Prabhupāda first made lists of prospective GBC members, he included women on the list. Are we to think that was an accident?

When directly asked if a woman could be a spiritual master, Śrīlā Prabhupāda replied, “Yes.” Should we think otherwise? While elaborating on his answer to this question, which was asked by a college professor, Śrīlā Prabhupāda said, “In our material world, is there any prohibition that a woman cannot become a professor? If she is qualified, she can become a professor. What is the wrong there? She must be qualified. That is the position. So similarly, if the woman understands Kṛṣṇa consciousness perfectly, she can become guru.” (Interview, Toronto, June 18, 1976)

Here Prabhupāda reiterates the same point he made in his purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.47, namely that one’s occupation is based not on one’s body but on one’s qualities and activities. Śrīlā Prabhupāda encouraged everyone, including women, to serve the Lord according to their propensities.

## Realism Needed

I just read the March/April issue, and I feel like I did when I first got in contact with BTG and Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in 1982. It is a wonderful magazine. So fresh, up-to-date, and enlivening. The design is fantastic.

I liked the editorial “You Can Do It!” very, very much. I think you should have more articles like that one.

However, I have a friendly suggestion. Let’s take, for example, Viśākhā Devī Dāsī’s article on women in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is a very nice and Kṛṣṇa conscious article, inspiring as well. But it is somewhat out of touch with reality. So many of us—men and women—struggle with our bad qualities, such as envy, lust, and greed. Maybe BTG can print articles about struggles and how to overcome them.

In my view, BTG should be a bridge between Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and ISKCON today, showing people how we strive for the ideal.

Akrūra Dāsa

Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

## Enlightened Girls

I am writing in reference to the article "Ashram Reflections," by Kṛṣṇa-priyā Devī Dāsī, in the May/June issue. As a mother and a young grandmother, all I can say is that my heart was so filled with joy. In this age of Kali-yuga, where boys go to school and kill everyone they can, where womanhood has become so degraded, this Vaiṣṇava Academy for Girls is a blessing for the state of Florida and the world. These young ladies are more enlightened than women three times their age. What a gift you are giving to the world: first-class Vaiṣṇava women!

Mrs. Shiva

Margate, Florida, USA

## Devotion and Maturity

I am a subscriber to BTG and an aspiring devotee of Kṛṣṇa. As the father of three teenage girls, I was truly touched to read of the devotion and maturity of the Vaiṣṇava Academy ashram girls.

Kevin McCoy

Valdosta, Georgia, USA

## Get a Life

"Ashram Reflections" shows a nice life, but I myself like a whole life. Everything isn't one-sided. It's wonderful to live a charmed life—private schools and your own tutor—but wouldn't it be nice to have a full life and be exposed to it all?

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda puts down all other yoga systems and says that bhakti-yoga is the best. Other systems are a waste of time. I

disagree. I started the yoga of exercises, breathing, and meditation at the tender age of fourteen. And now I enjoy it; it is part of me, and I will never give it up. Bhakti-yoga sounds good too. Doing them together would be enlightening.

Edith M. Gamble

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

OUR REPLY: As "Ashram Reflections" showed, the girls of the Vaiṣṇava Academy have a well-rounded life. But because they're training for a life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they're being protected from potentially harmful influences. They'll face the "real world" soon enough, and the effectiveness of their education will be tested. In the meantime, they're living in an environment that helps them grow up spiritually strong. Today, children growing up with every imaginable experience don't seem to be faring so well.

As for Śrīla Prabhupāda's emphasis on bhakti-yoga, the main point is that ultimately any yoga practice must lead to bhakti-yoga. That's because bhakti-yoga means to connect with God in devotion. So it is simultaneously the process and the goal. In other words, bhakti-yoga is really about loving God, and our yoga practice, or any other practice, has value when it helps us love God. 🌸

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## CORRECTION:

In the July/August issue, we mistakenly listed Dr. Ravi Singh as the author of "Carrying on His Father's Tradition," which was about Dr. Singh. The article also incorrectly identified Dr. Singh as a psychologist. He is a psychiatrist. The article was written by BTG associate editor Kālakanṭha Dāsa.

# What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on in the modern world a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five milleniums ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

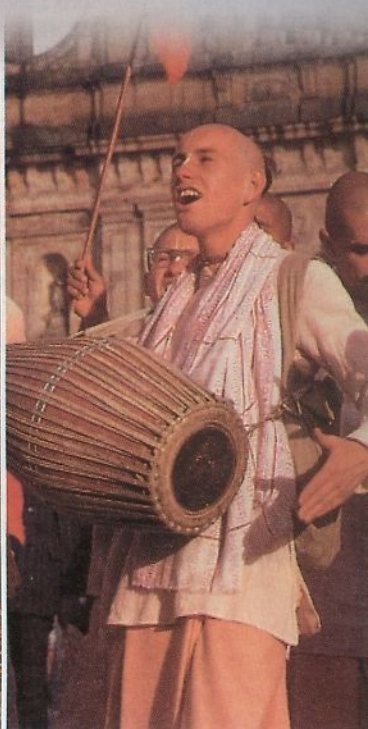
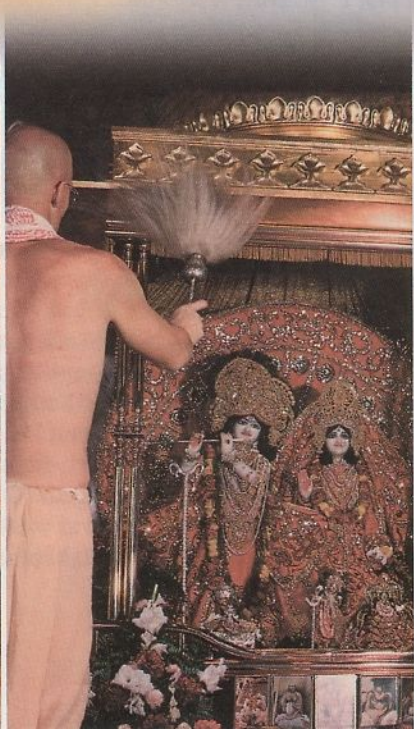
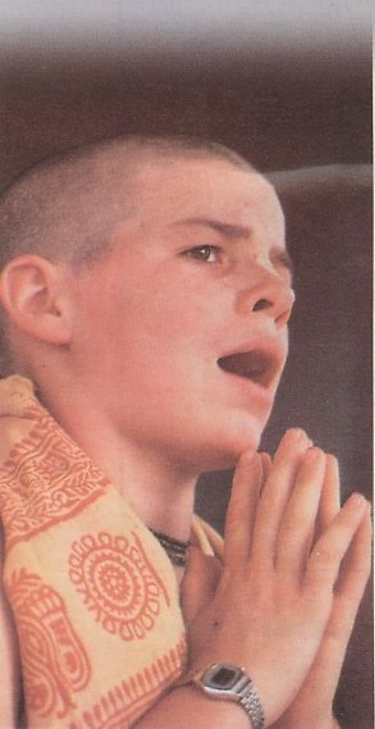
Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

## Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far** (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in **evade**, long **ī** like the **i** in **pique**. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **rim**, and **ṛ** like the **ch** in **chair**. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in **staunch-heart**, **hedgehog**, and **red-hot**. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

## Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or His great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."



# Try to Become IMMORTAL

*Is immortality a real possibility,  
or simply utopian nonsense?*

• • •

Adapted from a lecture given in London on August 22, 1973,

by **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo  
nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ  
ubhayor api dṛṣṭo 'ntas  
tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

“Those who are seers of the truth have concluded that of the nonexistent [the material body] there is no endurance and of the eternal [the soul] there is no change. This they have concluded by studying the nature of both.”—*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.16



modern civilization, the so-called scientists and philosophers cannot even imagine the possibility of becoming immortal. Then why is Kṛṣṇa speaking about immortality? Is He speaking something utopian? No, He is speaking fact. Otherwise, if Kṛṣṇa is speaking something nonsense or utopian, then no one would be interested to read *Bhagavad-gītā*.

You may argue that we are foolish persons who indulge in reading *Bhagavad-gītā* even though Kṛṣṇa is speaking uto-

**T**HERE ARE TWO things: *sat* and *asat*. *Sat* means that which exists eternally, and *asat* means that which is temporary, which appears and disappears. A Vedic injunction says, “*Don’t be entangled in the temporary; try to come to the platform of eternity.*”

In the previous verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa says:

*yaṁ hi na vyathayanty ete  
puruṣaṁ puruṣarābha  
sama-duḥkha-sukhaṁ dhīraṁ  
so 'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

“Those who are not disturbed by the material changes are eligible for liberation.” Our mission, the human mission, is to come to the platform of immortality. In

modern civilization, the so-called scientists and philosophers cannot even imagine the possibility of becoming immortal. Then why is Kṛṣṇa speaking about immortality? Is He speaking something utopian? No, He is speaking fact. Otherwise, if Kṛṣṇa is speaking something nonsense or utopian, then no one would be interested to read *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Our business should be to engage on the eternal platform not on the temporary platform. Real human civilization should be based on becoming immortal. That is the distinction between India and other countries. Now, I’m not speaking of India today, but formerly India was guided by great spiritual teachers like Vyāsadeva, the original spiritual master. Vyāsadeva was a great learned scholar. He recorded so many books: four *Vedas*, eighteen *Purāṇas*, *Vedānta-sūtra*,

*At left: By serving the Lord we can win His favor and gain entrance into His eternal abode.*

# *If you associate with the eternal, you advance in spiritual life. And if you associate with the temporary, you become degraded.*



*Upaniṣads*. He guided the whole society, but he lived very humbly. Even Cāṅkya Paṇḍita, a prime minister, lived in a cottage. That is the distinction between Vedic or Indian civilization and modern civilization. Indian civilization means interest in the eternal, whereas others are interested in the temporary.

Formerly, of course, India was also very materially opulent. Four hundred years ago India was so opulent that Europeans were attracted to go there. Even during the time of the Mogul Empire, India was very opulent. In Delhi you can visit the Red Fort. You'll see on the walls pictures of birds and trees that were once covered with jewels. There are holes now where the jewels were. Material opulence means jewels, gold, silk, butter—not plastic pots, plastic buckets, plastic cloth. These things have no real value.

## THE AIM OF SPIRITUAL CIVILIZATION

So the people of India traditionally stressed permanent, spiritual civilization. Their aim was to make this life perfect and become immortal. The whole effort was to conquer birth and death. Modern people do not understand that birth and death can be conquered. They only imagine, "By scientific advancement, someday we shall become immortal." But here is information from *Bhagavad-gītā*. Kṛṣṇa says we can become immortal; He's not speaking something nonsense or utopian.

We should be interested in permanent life, not temporary life. This life, this material life, is temporary. We may live for ten years or ten hours. There are living entities who live for ten minutes, and there are living entities who live for ten million or ten

billion years. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, residents of Brahmaloḳa, the highest planet, live billions of years. All these durations of life are within this material world, but no life here is permanent. Whether you live for ten billion years, ten minutes, or ten seconds, your life is temporary.

That is being explained here. *Nāśato vidyate bhāvaḥ*. The material body has no endurance; it will not permanently exist. *Nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ*: The soul is permanent. The soul has no change; it will never be nonexistent.

Kṛṣṇa says, "My dear Arjuna, you, I, and all the kings and soldiers assembled here—it is not that we did not exist in the past." That means we are not the body. This body was not existing in my past life. But because I am soul, I am existing now, I existed in the past, and I will exist in the future. That is *sat*. Therefore, spirit has no change.

## THE ENTANGLEMENT

Sometimes we experience that a thread becomes tangled and to find the beginning is very difficult. Similarly, because of our attachment to the material body, we become entangled in material life. In this meeting we don't talk of material things. Here we talk only about the spirit soul, Kṛṣṇa, our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, how to satisfy Kṛṣṇa.

Formerly, this place was known as Piggot's Manor. Now we have named it Bhaktivedanta Manor. What is the difference? Formerly, it was for sense gratification. Now it is for elevating one to the spiritual standard of life. Anything can be changed like that for *sat-saṅga*—spiritual association. If you associate with the eternal, you advance in spiritual life. And if you associate with the temporary, you become de-

graded. Don't be entangled. Try to become liberated from the entanglement. That is the mission of life.

These things cannot be understood as long as we are in darkness. Darkness means sinful life. The more we engage in sinful life, the more we fail to understand what is eternal and what is temporary. So we should be purified. The whole human life is meant for purification, just as a diseased person must be purified from the contamination. In material existence we are impure, contaminated by the three modes of material nature: goodness, passion, and ignorance.

Even the quality of goodness is contaminating. For example, a *brāhmaṇa*, or learned, cultured person, is considered in the mode of goodness. But he is entangled if does not try to become immortal and simply thinks, "Now I have brahminical qualifications. I'm educated, I'm very clean, I'm very controlled, I know what is what." If he does not try to go further ahead—to become immortal—he is still entangled.

Those in the mode of passion think, "I'm so rich, so powerful. I have my nice wife and family and so many nice businesses." That is the conception of life of one controlled by the mode of passion. Such a person is certainly bound.

And those under the mode of ignorance do not know the value of life. Lazy, unclean, and ignorant, they are very firmly bound.

The more you are enlightened about the value of life, the more you become liberated. The more you become liberated, the more you advance in spiritual knowledge. Therefore, these meetings we hold every day are meant for advancing in spiritual life. Here there is no program on how to become rich, how to possess more cars, how to have a bigger bank balance, how to have a



nice dress. These are material things.

And we are not interested in increasing the influence of the mode of ignorance—how to sleep thirty-four hours a day when there are only twenty-four. We see how some people sleep until two o'clock in the afternoon. If you rise at two o'clock in the morning, that is nice. But they are accustomed to get up at two o'clock in the afternoon, because they think, "The more we sleep, the more we enjoy life."

Therefore, they are like the Śūnyavādīs, philosophers who believe that the ultimate truth is void. Some people want to become zero by always sleeping. But that is not life. Śūnyavāda philosophy is not life. Activity is life. Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, "Don't become zero. Be engaged always in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra." That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement. We are not going to be zero. We want to be very active, not for sense gratification but for Kṛṣṇa's service.

## ELEVATION OR DEGRADATION?

Now what is Kṛṣṇa's service? That we are teaching, how to worship Kṛṣṇa.

*śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ  
smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam  
arcanam vandanaṁ dāsyam  
sakhyam ātma-nivedanam*

These are the nine kinds of service to Kṛṣṇa: hearing about Him, chanting His glories, remembering Him, serving His lotus feet, worshiping Him, offering Him prayers, becoming His servant, and surrendering everything to Him. These services are all eternal, spiritual. The more we engage in them, the more we are elevated, and the more we engage in activities of material sense gratification, the more we are degraded.

If you perform your occupation, your duty, very nicely but have no Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the scripture says you are simply wasting time and laboring hard. That's all. Therefore Kṛṣṇa explains the distinction between the temporary and the eternal. We should not be much interested in the temporary, because then our life is spoiled. We should be interested in the eternal. That will make our life successful.

Unfortunately, people today do not know, cannot imagine even, that there is a possibility of becoming immortal. It is more than a possibility; it is a fact. And chanting Kṛṣṇa's name is so important in this regard. In the scripture it is said, *kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta saṅgaḥ param vrajet*: "By chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa one attains the supreme."

*Param* means "spiritual." There are two kinds of energy: *parā* and *aparā*.

The material world is *aparā*, inferior energy. Besides this there is another nature, which is *parā*, spiritual. We should be interested in the spiritual, not the material. Why? Because that is real life.

In today's verse it is said that the difference between the spiritual and the material is studied by the those who have realized the truth, the *tattva-darśibhiḥ*. The word *tattva* is very  
(please turn to page 30)



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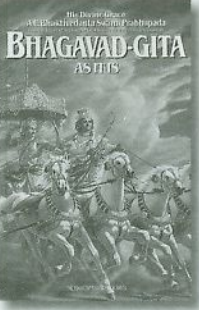
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# Q&A on the GĪTĀ

Compiled by Krishan B. Lal



Detail of a painting by Parikṣit Dāsa

*As the Battle of Kurukṣetra is about to begin, Lord Kṛṣṇa instructs Arjuna about five major topics: the Supreme Lord, the living entities, material nature, time, and karma.*

# PART 3

*The Gītā, or Bhagavad-gītā (“The Song of God”), was spoken five thousand years ago by Lord Kṛṣṇa to the prince Arjuna. It contains the essence of Vedic knowledge.*

*The compiler has applied a question/answer format to the Introduction to Bhagavad-gītā As It Is, by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.*

## What are the *jīvas*?

The *jīvas* are we living entities, or living beings, and we are minute parts of the Supreme Lord. We are of the same quality as the supreme controller, just as a particle of gold is also gold, or a drop of water from the ocean is salty.

We living entities, being part of the supreme controller, Lord Kṛṣṇa, have all the qualities of the Supreme Lord in minute quantity. We are minute, subordinate controllers, trying to control nature, as presently we are trying to control space or planets, and this tendency to control is there because it is in Kṛṣṇa. But although we have a tendency to lord it over material nature, we should know that we are not the supreme controller.

The *jīvas*, the living entities, are controlled. If a living entity says that he is not controlled but that he is free, then he is insane. The living being is controlled in every respect, at least in his conditioned life.

## What is *prakṛti*?

*Prakṛti* is the energy of the Supreme Lord. Material nature is the inferior *prakṛti*, and the living entity is the superior *prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is always subordinate, predominated by the Lord, who is the predominator. The living entities and material nature are both predominated, controlled by the Supreme Lord. Material nature itself comprises three modes: goodness, passion, and ignorance.

## What is the role of time in the material manifestation?

Eternal time is above the three modes of material nature. Time is the duration of the whole universe or the manifestation of material nature. Time is the ultimate destroyer and remains in effect during both the manifest and the unmanifest phases of material nature.

## What is karma?

By a combination of the three modes of nature and under the control and purview of eternal time, there are activities, which are called karma. The cosmic manifestation is full of different activities. All living entities are engaged in different activities. The activities are being carried out from time immemorial, and we are suffering or enjoying the fruits of our activities. For instance, suppose I am a businessman and have worked very hard with intelligence and have amassed a great bank balance. Then I am an enjoyer. But then say I have lost all my money in business; then I am a sufferer. Similarly, in every field of life we enjoy the results of our work, or we suffer the results. This is called karma.

The effects of karma may be very old indeed. We are suffering or enjoying the results of our activities from time immemorial, but we can change the results of our karma, or our activity, and this change depends on the perfection of our knowledge. We are engaged in various activities. Undoubtedly, we do not know what sort of activities we should adopt to gain relief from the actions and reactions of all these activities, but this is also explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

## Are *īśvara*, *jīva*, *prakṛti*, *kāla*, and karma eternal?

*Īśvara* (the Supreme Lord), *jīva* (the living entity, *prakṛti* (nature), *kāla* (eternal time), and karma (activity) are all explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Out of these five, the Lord, the living entities, material nature, and time are eternal. The material nature is the separated energy of the Supreme Lord, and similarly the living entities are also the energy of the Supreme Lord, although they are not

separated but eternally related. So the Lord, the living entity, material nature, and time are all interrelated and are all eternal. The other item, karma, is not eternal.

## Is material nature “false,” as claimed by some Vedāntists?

The material nature, or *prakṛti*, may be temporary, but according to the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā* it is not false. It is accepted as real but temporary. It is likened unto a cloud that moves across the sky, or the rainy season, which nourishes grains. As soon as the rainy season is over and the clouds go away, all the crops nourished by the rain dry up. Similarly, the material manifestation takes place at a certain interval, stays for a while, and then disappears. Such are the workings of *prakṛti*. But this cycle is working eternally. Therefore *prakṛti* is eternal; it is not false. The Lord refers to it as “My *prakṛti*.”

## What is the difference between the superior *prakṛti* (the living entities) and the inferior *prakṛti* (the material manifestation)?

Both the living entity and material nature are *prakṛti*, the energy of the Supreme Lord, but one of the two, the living entity (*jīva*) is conscious. The other *prakṛti* is not conscious. Therefore the *jīva-prakṛti* is called superior because the *jīva* has consciousness similar to the Lord’s. Another distinction is that the material energy is known as the separated energy of the Lord, whereas the living entities are eternally related to the Lord as His parts.

## What are the three main energies of the Supreme Lord?

The Supreme Lord has diverse and innumerable energies beyond our conception; however, great learned sages or liberated souls have studied these energies and have analyzed them into three parts. The first energy is *parā*, transcendental. The second is the living entities, which also belong to the superior energy. And the third is the material energies, which are in the mode of ignorance.

## What is consciousness?

Consciousness, or the sense of “I am,” is the primary symptom of the presence of the soul in the living entity. Both the consciousness of the Supreme Lord and that of the living entities are transcendental.

Any claim that consciousness is generated by the association of matter is a mistaken idea. The theory that consciousness develops under certain circumstances of material combination is not accepted in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The living entity's consciousness may be pervertedly reflected by the covering of material circumstances, just as light reflected through colored glass may appear to be of a certain color, but the consciousness of the Lord is not materially affected.

## What is false ego?

False consciousness is exhibited under the impression that I am a product of material nature. This is called false ego. One absorbed in bodily conceptions cannot understand his situation. In contaminated consciousness “I am” means “I am the lord of all I survey. I am the enjoyer.” The world revolves because every living being thinks that he is the lord and creator of the material world.

## How can the living entity find everlasting satisfaction?

The living entity can find everlasting satisfaction by cooperating with the Supreme Lord.

Material consciousness has two psychic divisions. One is that I am the

creator, and the other is that I am the enjoyer. But actually the Supreme Lord is both the creator and the enjoyer, and the living entity, being part of the Supreme Lord, is neither the creator nor the enjoyer, but a cooperator. He is the created and the enjoyed.

For instance, one nourishes a tree by watering its root, and one nourishes the body by feeding the stomach, for if the body is to be kept in a healthy state, then the parts of the body must cooperate to feed the stomach. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is the enjoyer and the creator, and we, as subordinate living beings, are meant to cooperate to satisfy Him. This cooperation will actually help us, just as food taken by the stomach will help all other parts of the body. If the fingers of the hand think they should take the food themselves instead of giving it to the stomach, then they will be frustrated.

The central figure of creation and of enjoyment is the Supreme Lord, and the living entities are cooperators. By cooperation they enjoy. The relation is also like that of the master and the servant. If the master is fully satisfied, then the servant is satisfied.

## What is the difference between the supreme consciousness of the supreme controller and the individual consciousness of living entities?

The position of the Supreme Lord is that of supreme consciousness. The living entities, being parts of the Supreme Lord, are also conscious; however, one should not claim that the

living entity is also supremely conscious. The living being cannot be supremely conscious at any stage of his perfection, and the theory that he can be so is a misleading theory. Conscious he may be, but he cannot become perfectly or supremely conscious by any process of so-called merging of the individual consciousness with the supreme consciousness. A drop of water does not disintegrate or dissolve when it merges with the ocean.

The distinction between the living entities and the supreme controller is further explained in the thirteenth chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. The Lord is *kṣetra-jñā*, conscious, as is the living being, but the living being is conscious of his particular body, whereas the Lord is conscious of all bodies. Because the Lord lives in the heart of every living being, He is conscious of the psychic movements of the particular *jīvas*.

It is also explained that the Paramātmā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is living in everyone's heart as the controller and giving directions for the living entity to act as he desires.

Lord Kṛṣṇa also says that when He descends into the material universe, His consciousness is not materially affected. If He were so affected, He would be unfit to speak on transcendental matters as He does in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. One cannot say anything about the transcendental world without being free from materially contaminated consciousness.

So the Lord is not materially contaminated. Our consciousness, at the present moment, however, is materially contaminated. Consciousness is already there because we are part of the Lord, but for us there is the affinity of being affected by the inferior modes of material nature. The Lord, however, being the Supreme, is never affected. That is the difference between the Supreme Lord and the small individual souls. ☀

*Krishnan B. Lal, an ISKCON Life Member, is retired and lives in Huntington Beach, California.*

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# Glossary

- Ācārya**—a spiritual master who teaches by example.
- Balarāma**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.
- Battle of Kurukṣetra**—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.
- Bhagavad-gītā**—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna.
- Bhakti**—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.
- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.
- Bhakti-yoga**—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu**—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.
- Dharma**—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).
- Godhead**—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.
- Gurukula**—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally “the place of the guru”).
- Hare Kṛṣṇa**—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.
- ISKCON**—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Java**—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.
- Kali-yuga**—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.
- Karma**—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.
- Kīrtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).
- Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendent form (see “Godhead”).
- Mahābhārata**—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.
- Māya**—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.
- Māyāvādī**—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal or void.
- Modes of nature**—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.
- Nityānanda**—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- Prasādam**—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally “mercy”).
- Purāṇas**—Vedic histories.
- Rādhārāṇī**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.
- Rathayātrā**—“chariot festival”: a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Purī, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, “the Lord of the universe”).
- Sannyāsa**—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.
- Śrī**—an honorific meaning “opulent” (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).
- Śrīla Prabhupāda**—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.
- Supersoul**—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.
- Upaniṣads**—the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas*.
- Varṇāśrama**—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).
- Vṛndāvana**—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.
- Vaiṣṇava**—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).
- Vedas**—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.
- Vedic**—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.
- Viṣṇu**—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see “Godhead”); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

# Qualified By Simplicity

*For serving Lord Kṛṣṇa,  
is being simple a bad thing?*

by Girirāja Swami

AFTER SUCCESSFULLY launching the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the West, Śrīla Prabhupāda returned to India with plans to build at least three large centers, including one in Mumbai. I worked on the Mumbai project, and because Prabhupāda was intimately involved with it, I was fortunate to learn many valuable lessons from him during that time.

In late 1971 a prominent businessman, Mr. A. B. Nair, offered Prabhupāda some land in Juhu, on the outskirts of Mumbai. Later we discovered that Mr. Nair was very tricky and cunning. Before taking money for the land from Prabhupāda, he had already taken—and kept—money from two other parties.

After Prabhupāda signed the purchase agreement and left Mumbai, Yaduvara Dāsa and I had to deal with Mr. Nair. We would meet him at his home in Juhu and talk, but we couldn't understand: Was he our friend, or was he our enemy?

Ultimately, from thousands of miles away in Los Angeles, Prabhupāda concluded that Mr. Nair was trying to cheat us.

Eventually Prabhupāda came to Mumbai to deal with the matter. Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami told him how Mr. Nair had bluffed me. Perhaps he expected Prabhupāda to reprove me. But Prabhupāda replied, "Girirāja is simple. What can be done?"

Prabhupāda's words stayed in my mind: "Girirāja is simple." I considered my simplicity a fault

or a disqualification.

Some months later, while reading the book *Kṛṣṇa* to Prabhupāda during his morning walks on Juhu Beach, I came to the chapter "The Salvation of Tṛṇāvarta," in which Lord Kṛṣṇa defeats a demon who had assumed the form of a whirlwind. There I read: "After observing such wonderful happenings, Nanda Mahārāja [Kṛṣṇa's foster father] began to think of the words of Vasudeva [Kṛṣṇa's father] again and again."

Previously we had read how Nanda Mahārāja considered Vasudeva a great sage and mystic yogī because Vasudeva had foretold an incident that happened in Vṛndāvana, where Kṛṣṇa was living.

Prabhupāda remarked, "Vasudeva is a *kṣatriya* [a member of the ruling or martial class]. With political eyesight, Vasudeva predicted, 'This may happen,' but Nanda Mahārāja, as a *vaiśya*, a simple agriculturalist, thought, 'Oh, Vasudeva is a foreseer.'"

I noticed that Prabhupāda was applying the word *simple* to a pure devotee—Nanda Mahārāja—and I was surprised. I wondered how a pure devotee like Nanda Mahārāja could have a disqualification such as being simple.

So I asked Prabhupāda, "Simplicity is not considered a bad quality?"

Prabhupāda replied, "No, no. For him it is all right. He is a *vaiśya*, so he should believe like that. And a politician should act like Vasudeva. One should not imitate. For example, a physician does operations, but I should not imitate and take the knife and operate. That is not my business."

Then Prabhupāda explained, "But Vasudeva was thinking of Kṛṣṇa, and Nanda Mahārāja was also thinking of Kṛṣṇa. As a simple agriculturalist, Nanda Mahārāja was thinking of Kṛṣṇa. And Vasudeva, when he was asking Nanda Mahārāja,

‘Go take care of your children there,’ he was also thinking of Kṛṣṇa. If thinking of Kṛṣṇa is there, then whether *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya* or *brāhmaṇa*—it doesn’t matter. Everyone gets the same benefit.

“Everyone should understand, ‘Whatever I may be, I am an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.’ So if this consciousness is maintained and everyone is engaged in the service of Kṛṣṇa by his work and by his occupational duty, then he is perfect.”

Prabhupāda’s answer was deep. He said that for a person in a certain position simplicity may be a good qualification, and for another it may

not be. For a *vaiśya* or a *brāhmaṇa* to be simple may be good, but not for a *kṣatriya*, who has to deal with politics and diplomacy. Yet ultimately it doesn’t matter whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *kṣatriya*, a *vaiśya*, or whatever. What matters is that one works in Kṛṣṇa’s service and thinks of Him in love—in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. ☸

*Girirāja Swami serves as an ISKCON Governing Body Commissioner for Mumbai, Mauritius, Spain, Portugal, South Africa, and several other places.*

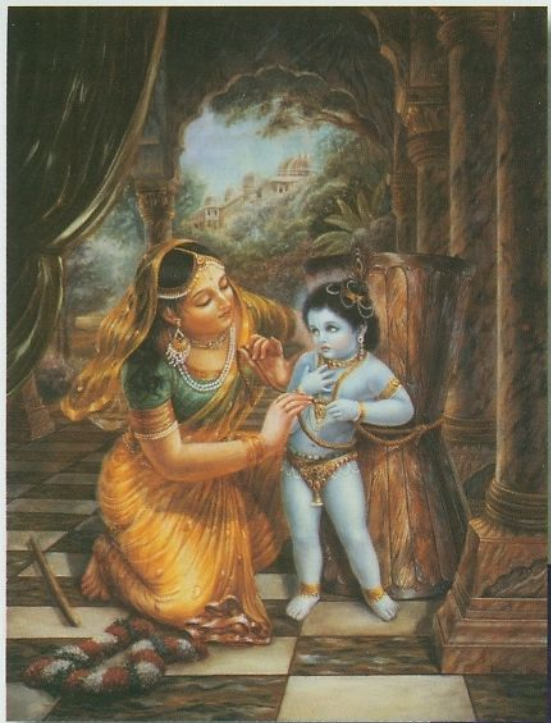


Painting by Parikṣit Dāsa

*Nanda Mahārāja, Kṛṣṇa’s foster father, may lack the sophistication of a politician, but his simplicity is no disqualification for loving Kṛṣṇa.*

# The Hub of

*Many great devotees reside eternally at the Rādhā-*



“Vṛndāvana is a charmingly beautiful place, and situated there in the grove known as Seva Kunja is the sacred temple of Rādhā-Dāmodara. I take the lotus feet of these Deities as my only shelter, and I petition Them to be kind upon me and guide me to life’s ultimate goal.”

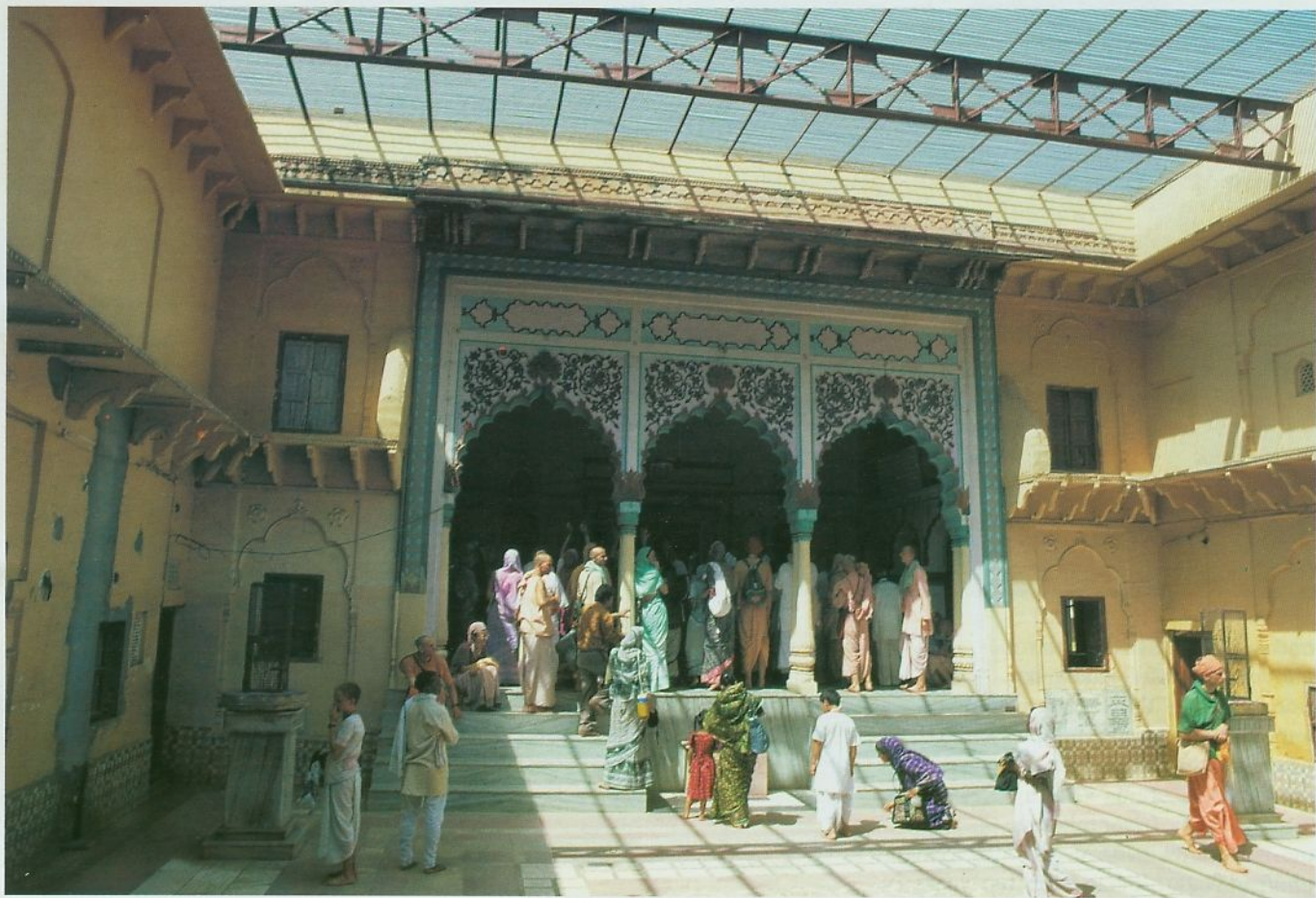
—*Srīla Prabhupāda*

*Above left: Lord Kṛṣṇa received the name “Dāmodara” because, having stolen yogurt, He was once bound (dāma) around the waist (udāra) by His mother. Above: The Deities of Rādhā-Dāmodara and, on Dāmodara’s right, the goṣī (cowherd girl) Lalitā, one of Their principal associates. At right, devotees crowd the entrance to the Deities’ chamber to view the Deities and offer prayers.*



# the Spiritual World

*Dāmodara temple, one of the oldest temples in Vṛndāvana.*



by Vṛndāvanī Devī Dāsī

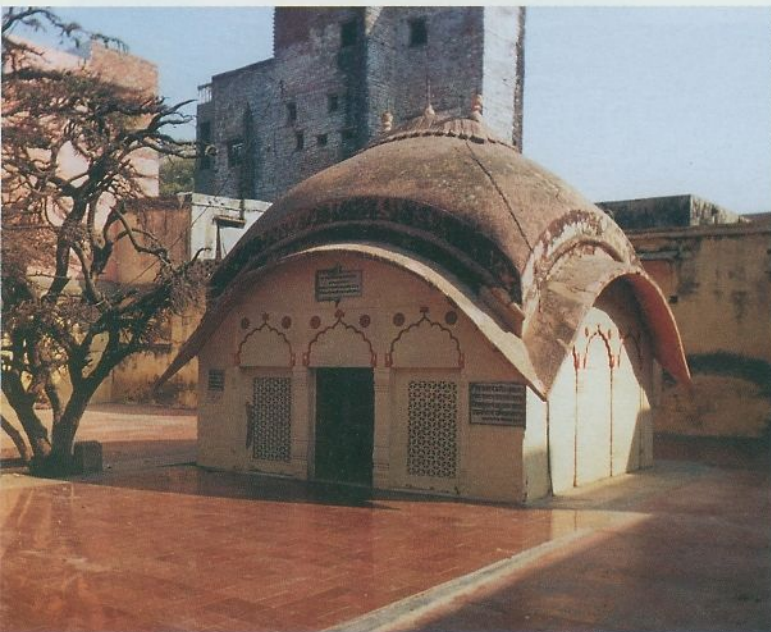
**T**ODAY I HAVE THE GREAT fortune of being in Vṛndāvana, India, home to some five thousand temples of Lord Kṛṣṇa. For a few weeks during the holy month of Dāmodara (October–November), I have left aside all my worldly commitments in search of spiritual rejuvenation. Here, in this

sacred place at this auspicious time, any service performed for Lord Kṛṣṇa is said to be magnified one thousand times.

Lord Kṛṣṇa sported in Vṛndāvana five thousand years ago. About four hundred years ago Lord Caitanya's principal disciples, the six Gosvāmīs,

established several temples in Vṛndāvana that today remain the central places of worship. I'm on my way to visit one of those famous original temples—the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple—just off busy Loi Bazaar. “Dāmodara” is a name for Kṛṣṇa that means “bound at the waist.” Kṛṣṇa's mother

*During the infamous attacks on Vṛndāvana's temples in 1670, the Moguls went straight past Rādhā-Dāmodara, mistaking it for a private residence and sparing the temple from attack.*



Mata Śaci Devi Dasī

once bound His belly with ropes when He was a playful young boy. Alongside Kṛṣṇa at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, as with most temples in Vṛndāvana, stands Rādhā, His eternal consort.

My ricksha driver takes me through the narrow, twisting, crowded streets of Vṛndāvana. It has been ten years since I last came here, but everything looks familiar. We pass by chanting pilgrims, busy shopkeepers, women carrying goods on their heads, and laughing children calling “*Haribol!*” [“Chant God’s name!”] Then there are the animals—cows, pigs, dogs, camels, horses, and the mischievous monkeys.

After paying the ricksha driver ten rupees, I proceed barefoot, the reverential way to tread on holy soil. After a

*From his kitchen at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple (right), Śrīla Prabhupāda looks out at the samādhi of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (above).*

short walk I come to the gateway of the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple. The temple is not visible from the arched gateway, which looks like it might be the entrance to a private house. During the infamous attacks on Vṛndāvana’s temples in 1670, the Moguls went straight past Rādhā-Dāmodara, mistaking it for a private residence and sparing the temple from attack. Out of fear of the Moguls, the temple priests had already moved the original Rādhā-Dāmodara



Deities to Jaipur, a stronghold of Kṛṣṇa devotees, where the Deities remain today.

To the left of the gateway the main entrance comes into view. Before entering the temple, I wash my feet at the tap near the door. As I pass through the stone archway, everything appears just as I remember it. An old festival cart lies next to the doorway. Sacred Tulasi plants grace each corner of the open-air central courtyard. At the right-hand



ing of the holy names. Rādhā-Dāmodara—Their beautiful eyes resembling lotus petals—share their altar with Rādhā's assistant Lalitā and three other sets of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities.

Before building any temples in Vṛndāvana, the Gosvāmīs worshiped their Deities in the hollows of trees. The original Dāmodara Deity, now in Jaipur, is only eight inches high. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī carved the Deity in 1542 for his disciple Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Finding a hollow big enough for the new Dāmodara Deity would be difficult—He's nearly five feet tall.

Today Dāmodara's dark form and Rādhā's golden form are dressed in white with golden jewelry. Sandalwood-paste designs adorn their faces. Kṛṣṇa wears a garland of sacred Tulasī leaves and flowers, while Rādhā's is made of lotus buds. The divine couple smile sweetly. The other Deities are similarly decorated.

At the end of the *ārati* the *pūjārī* blows a conch shell and then distributes Tulasī leaves from the Deities to eager outstretched hands. It is said that anyone who tastes Tulasī leaves that have touched Kṛṣṇa's body will achieve the Lord's abode. A small donation enables me to see the Govardhana-śilā (a stone from sacred Govardhana

corner near the altar, a checkered marble floor leads to the rooms where my spiritual grandfather, Śrīla Prabhupāda, lived and wrote for several years before bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West. I climb the marble steps toward the central altar and pay my respects to the Deities.

Thousands of visitors come here every year. Today about a dozen local worshipers have come to see the Deities' *ārati* (worship) ceremony. Soon, a

*pūjārī* (priest) appears in the Deities' chamber and offers the Deities incense, a flaming lamp, water, a silk handkerchief, and a yak-tail fan. The *pūjārīs* perform this ceremony several times a day. As the *pūjārī* makes the offerings, a devotee rhythmically rings a large bell suspended overhead. With enthusiastic calls of "Jaya Dāmodara!" [All glory to Dāmodara!] and "Rādhe Rādhe!" [O Rādhā! O Rādhā!], the devotees begin congregational chant-

Hill) of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, kept here on the altar. The *pūjārī* lifts the large *śilā* and shows me the marks of Kṛṣṇa's footprint and a calf's hoofprint. Kṛṣṇa gave the stone to Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī to worship, as explained in the following story.

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī had taken a vow to walk around Govardhana Hill every day. (Such circumambulation, as devotees usually call it, is the traditional way to offer respect to a



sacred place or object.) When Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī became old, he struggled to complete the twenty-four-mile walk. Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared to him and said that now that he was old there was no need to go around Govardhana every day. Sanātana Gosvāmī replied that he had taken a vow and did not want to stop. Kṛṣṇa then instructed him to bring a stone from Govardhana. Kṛṣṇa stood on the stone and played His flute, which attracted a nearby calf. The stone began to melt in ecstasy, and Kṛṣṇa's footprint and the calf's hoofprint left impressions on the stone. Kṛṣṇa then told Sanātana Gosvāmī that four

times round this stone would equal going around Govardhana Hill.

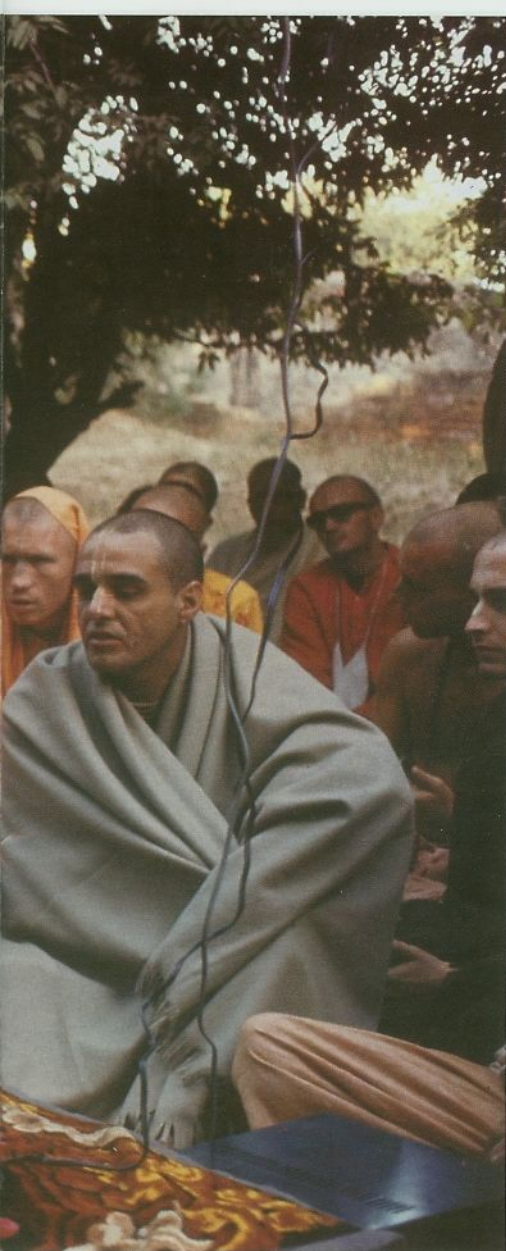
Nirmal Chandra Goswami and his five sons take care of the Deity worship here. His family has been serving Rādhā-Dāmodara for generations, being the disciplic descendants of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. The *pūjārī* services here and in the rest of Vṛndāvana are strictly for men only. The women cook and do other services.

### PRABHUPĀDA'S ROOMS

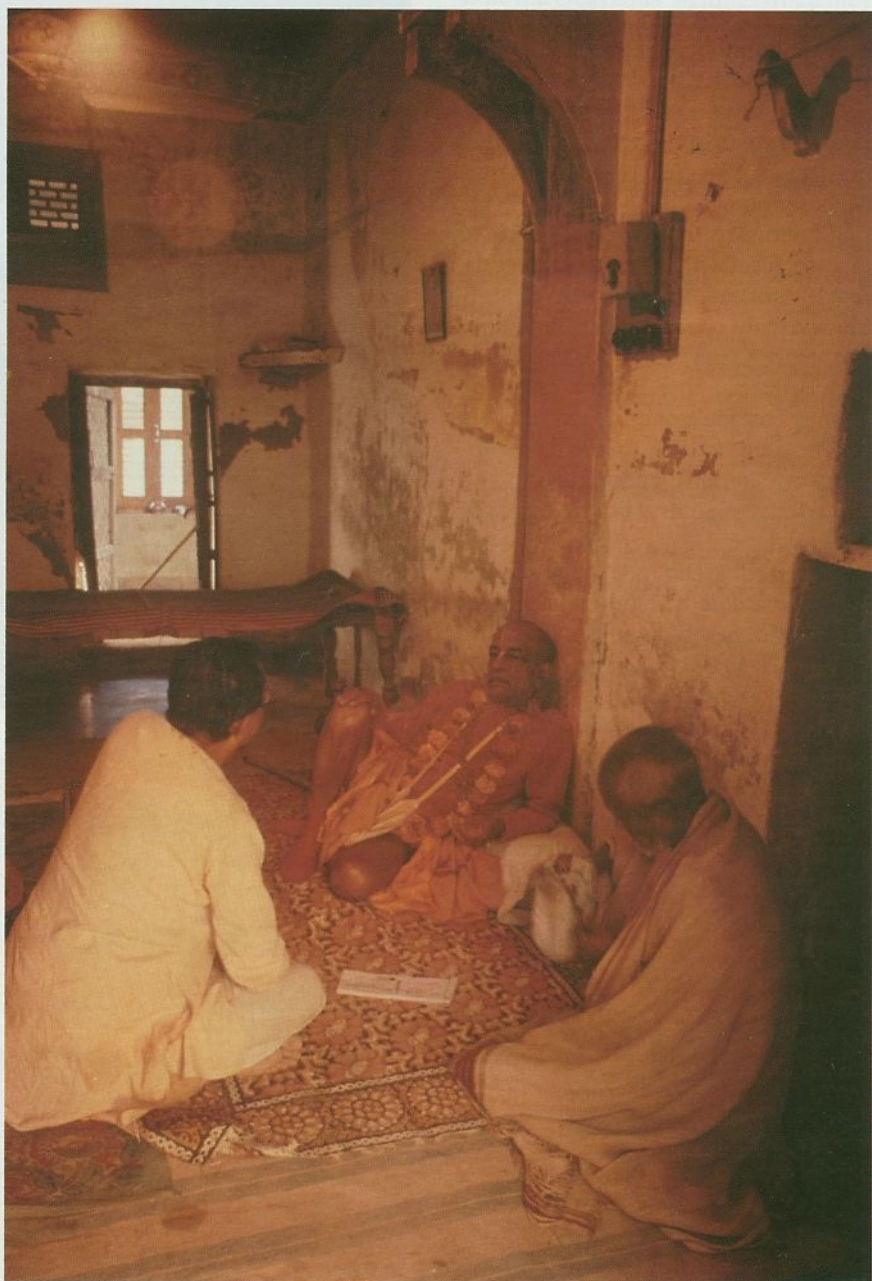
The curtains close, and I pay obeisances and descend the steps. I'm on my way to Śrīla Prabhupāda's rooms.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON, stayed at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple from 1959 to 1965. It was the last place he lived before going to the West. His memory is very much alive here.

Śrīla Prabhupāda used two rooms: his living quarters and a kitchen. I lightly tap on the brown wire-meshed door to the main room. On entering I see the life-sized *mūrti* (carved form) of Śrīla Prabhupāda at his desk, pen poised in hand. Here he translated the first volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into English. The room has the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra painted in Sanskrit around the top of the walls. Although



*On entering the room  
I see the life-sized mūrti (carved form)  
of Śrīla Prabhupāda at his desk,  
pen poised in hand. Here  
he translated the first volumes of  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam into English.*



*After his success in the West,  
in 1971 Śrīla Prabhupāda  
visited India and spent some  
time in his Rādhā-Dāmodara  
rooms (right). In 1972, in the  
courtyard of Śrīla Rūpa  
Gosvāmī's samādhi (above),  
Śrīla Prabhupāda gave a  
series of lectures on The  
Nectar of Devotion, his  
summary study of Śrīla Rūpa  
Gosvāmī's devotional classic  
Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu.*

the room is small, Śrīla Prabhupāda was fond of it. “I live eternally in my rooms at Rādhā-Dāmodara temple,” he said.

Facing the main room is the kitchen. At one end of the kitchen a small window looks out at Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *samādhi*.\* Śrīla Prabhupāda would sit and take his meals here, and he took Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī’s full blessings to start the worldwide Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. I imagine how this took place here in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s rooms, which possess a magical atmosphere.

### THE SAMĀDHI AREA

After paying respects to my spiritual grandfather, I make my way to the *samādhi* area outside, where a compact courtyard enshrines the remains of some of the greatest spiritual masters in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

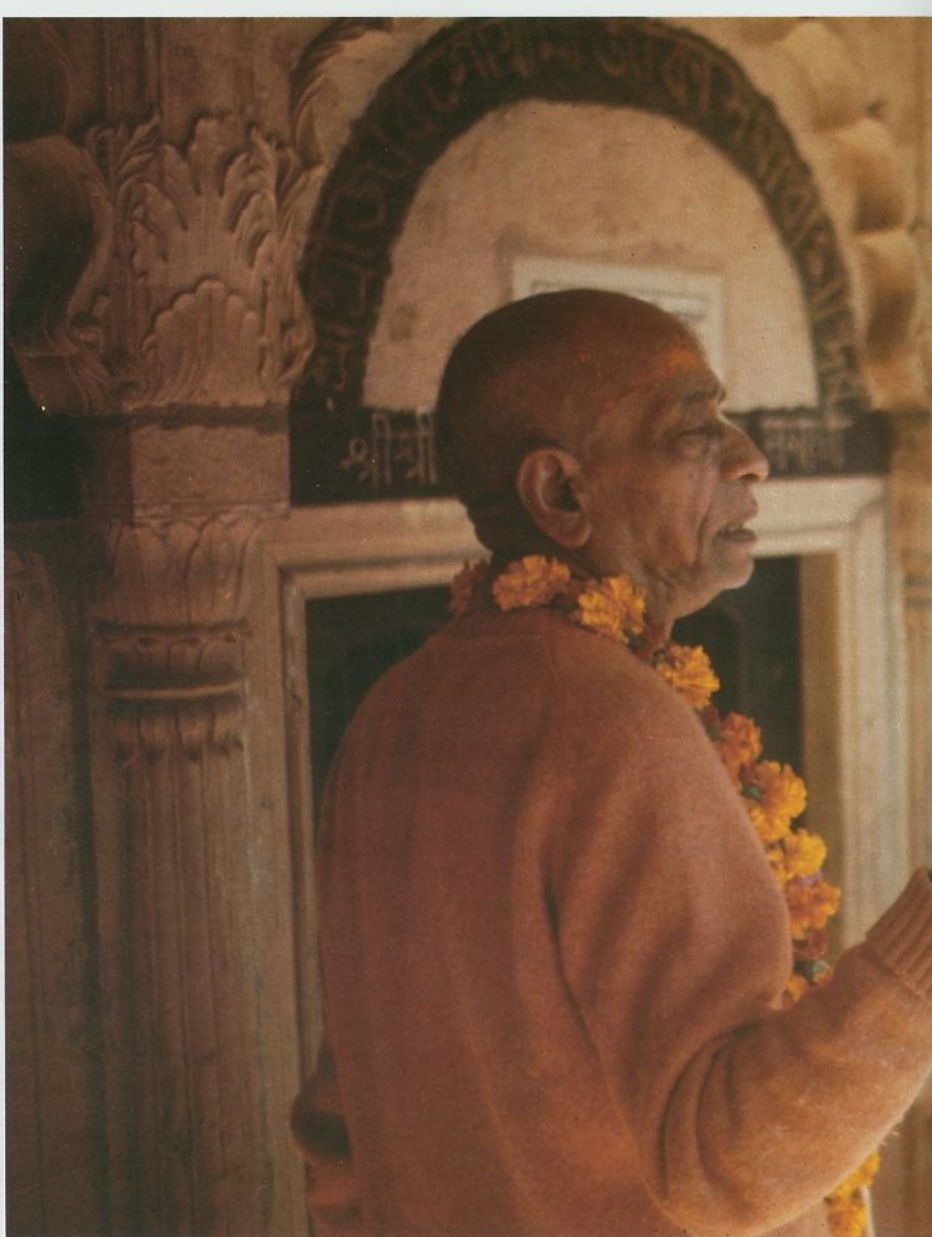
Chanting softly on my beads, I come face to face with several Vrajavasis, residents of holy Vṛndāvana. We hardly know a word of each other’s language, but “Hare Kṛṣṇa” says it all. They smile with approval that I have taken up Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The step leading to the *samādhis* has worn smooth, bearing witness to the countless souls who have passed through here.

The Rādhā-Dāmodara temple has many *samādhis*. The first on the right belong to Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī [see sidebar, page 24] and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī.

One of the six Gosvāmīs, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī organized the construction of the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple. Born in 1513, he was the youngest of the six Gosvāmīs and assisted the others. After the departure of the other Gosvāmīs, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was left in charge of the temples they had established. A great scholar and philoso-

\**Samādhi* means “sacred trance.” When great saints pass away they are said to have “entered *samādhi*.” Their tombs are also called *samādhis*. Saints are generally not cremated, and their bodies are entombed for veneration. *Samādhis* may also contain personal effects, items such as garlands worn by the saint, and, occasionally, the saint’s ashes.



*At one end of the kitchen a small window looks out at Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī’s samādhi. Śrīla Prabhupāda would sit and take his meals here, and he took Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī’s full blessings to start the worldwide Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.*



pher, he wrote more books than any of the other Gosvāmīs. At one time the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple held an impressive library. The temple was also famed for discourses given by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmīs, which attracted devotees from all over India.

I pay respects and then look up to see a couple of monkeys watching me. They seem to detect I don't come very often and are hoping I'll leave my possessions unattended. People regularly lose their glasses to monkeys, who take them to the bazaar to trade for food.

Nearby stands the *samādhi* of King Birhambhir of Vana Vishnupura, who stole the Gosvāmīs' writings when they were being transported to Bengal. He later became a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Further down stands the white square *puṣpa* (flower) *samādhi* of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Looking along the rows of *samādhis* I see flower garlands offered anonymously here and there. Two old women pass by in white saris, the dress of widows. One carries a plastic bag of milk. A hole in the bottom produces a trail—her way of honoring the sacred ground she treads. A small squirrel scurries about. How fortunate for him to be living at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, which Śrīla Prabhupāda called the hub of the spiritual world.

Continuing around the pathway, I notice an enclosed area with the most healthy looking Tulasī plants I

While giving his disciples a tour of the Rādhā-Dāmodara compound (above), Śrīla Prabhupāda stops at the *samādhi* of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. The *samādhi* area to the left of the courtyard (right) honors personal associates of Lord Caitanya as well as devotees who served Rādhā-Dāmodara over the past four hundred years.



## The Other Deities of the Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple

RĀDHĀ VṚNDĀVANA Candra, the tallest Deities on the altar here, were worshiped by Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. A great scholar, he wrote *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Govinda-līlāmṛta*. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī awarded him the title Kavirāja, “king of poets.”

Rādhā-Mādhava are the Dei-

ties of Jayadeva Gosvāmī. A *paṇḍita* in the royal court of Bengal, he left the opulence of palace life to write devotional songs. His works include *Gīta-Govinda*, a poem about Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes that is recited daily in the Jagannātha temple in Puri.

Rādhā-Chalachikan are the Deities of Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī, a

close friend of Lokanātha Gosvāmī. They were contemporaries of the six Gosvāmīs and worked to uncover the lost pastime places of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. To avoid material distractions, Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī performed his devotions underground. His *samādhi* is here at Rādhā-Dāmodara.



Rādhā-Dāmodara (center) with the other Deities worshiped at the temple. (The photo doesn't include Rādhā at the far right.)

have ever seen, along with roses and jasmine.

### ŚRĪ RŪPA GOSVĀMĪ'S COURTYARD

Through an archway Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's saffron-colored *bhajana-kuṭīra* (“worship hut”) and graceful *samādhi* come into view. This area contrasts sharply with the other side of the temple courtyard, which is packed with dozens of *samādhis*. Except for these two memorials to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and two small *samādhis*, only shining ground tiles fill the open courtyard. Every evening after the seven o'clock *ārati*, chanting and singing devotees

form a procession and go around the temple four times, ending here at Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's *samādhi*.

In 1516 Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his elder brother, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, came to Vṛndāvana under the direction of Lord Caitanya, who gave them the tasks of building temples, installing Deities, writing books, spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and finding the lost sites of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. The brothers wandered like mendicants all over Vṛndāvana, sleeping under a different tree every night. When they came to Seva Kunja, the site of this temple, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī selected it for his headquarters.

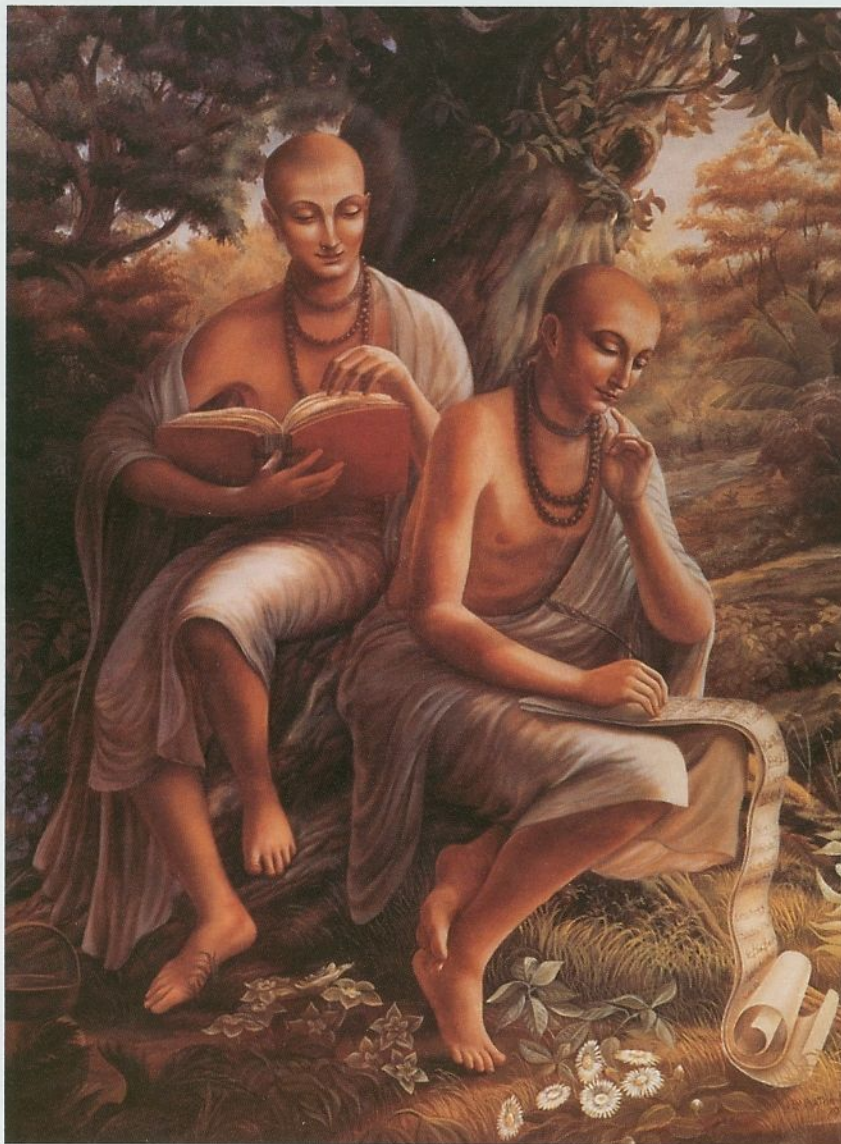
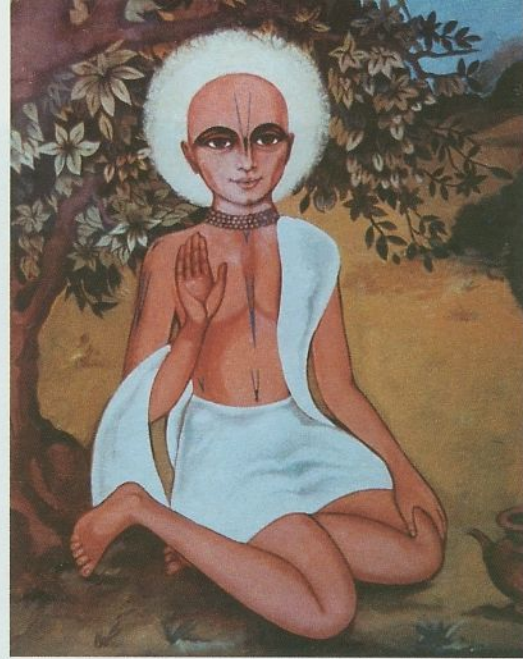
No temples or buildings stood here

then, just some trees. Every day the Gosvāmīs would meet here to discuss Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and give discourses. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī would write books here, sometimes on palm leaves and sometimes on handmade paper. His beautiful handwriting was said to resemble rows of pearls. Considered the leader of the six Gosvāmīs, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī treated his elder brother, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, as his guru and the others as his assistants. I bow before Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's *samādhi*.

Kanika Prasada Goswami, a member of the resident Goswami family, tells me that Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī would wash his feet in the pit beside the *samādhi* before serving his guru. Pray-



*I especially like visiting the Vaiṣṇava samādhis. Being at the samādhis enables me to feel closer to all these great personalities, who are actually present. They are able to give their blessings to those who seek their shelter.*



ing for his blessings, I happily place some of the dust from this holy spot to my head. One white and two dark trees produce some shade in this courtyard. Kanika Prasada tells me the white tree represents Western devotees who have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Out of all the wonderful places in Vṛndāvana, I especially like visiting the Vaiṣṇava *samādhis*. Being at the *samādhis* enables me to feel closer to all these great personalities, who are actually present. They are able to give their blessings to those who seek their shelter. A poem by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a pioneer in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West, explains the influence of a devotee before and after his departure:

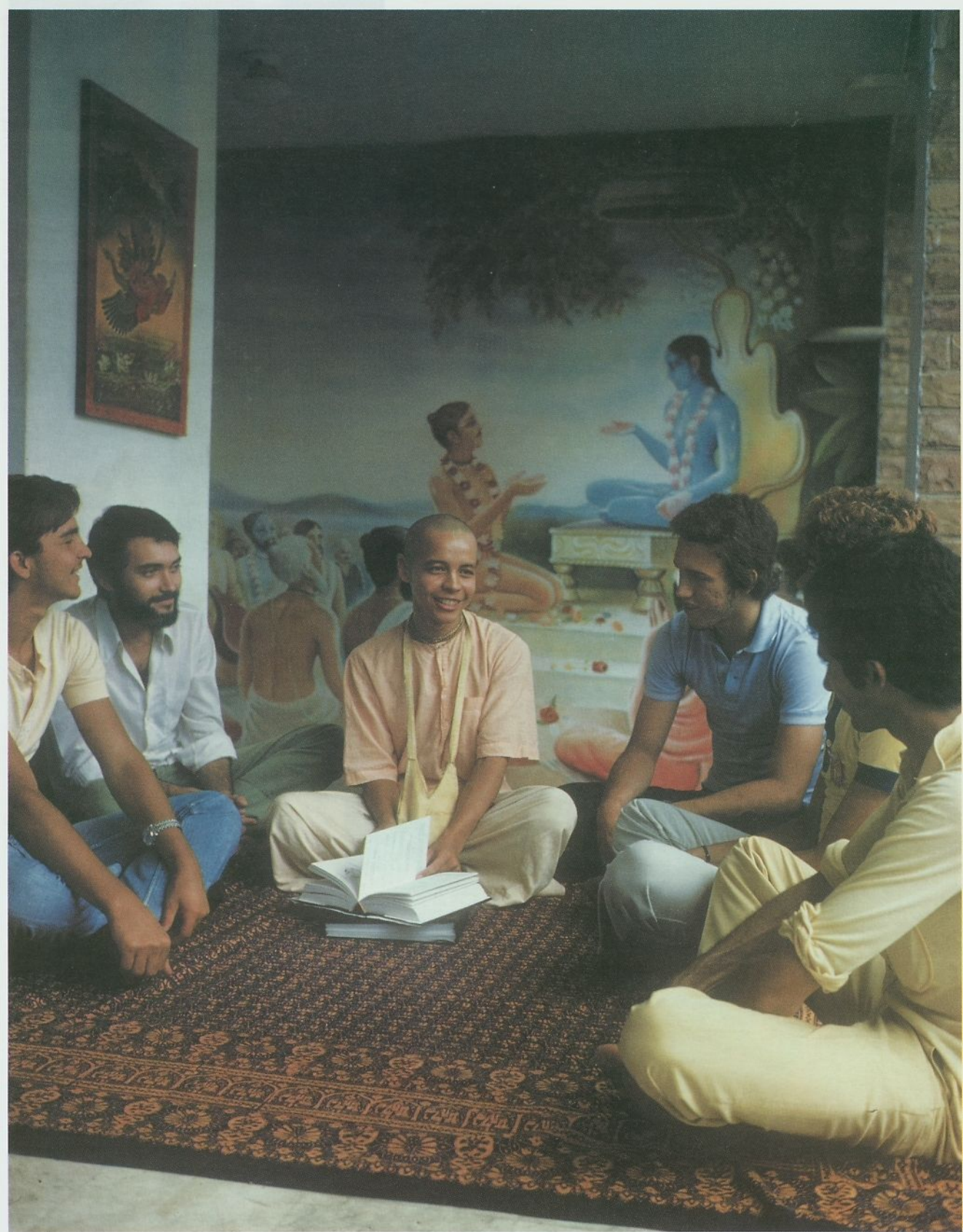
He reasons ill who tells that  
 Vaiṣṇavas die  
 When thou art living still in sound!  
 The Vaiṣṇavas die to live, and living  
 try  
 To spread the holy name around!

A nearby doorway brings me back into the temple courtyard. As I leave I silently pray to Rādhā-Dāmodara and all the devotees eternally residing there that I may come back to their wonderful temple well before another ten years goes by. ☀

*Vṛndāvanī Devī Dāśī joined ISKCON in 1980. She and her husband and their three children live near Bhaktivedanta Manor in England. She assists the temple's Life Membership department.*

Painting by Ramanātha Dāsa

*Above: Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī.  
 Top right: Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī.*



*Guests at a Hare Kṛṣṇa center listen as a devotee explains a verse from the authoritative scripture Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. (The painting in the background shows King Parikṣit hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from the sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī five thousand years ago.)*

## 1: HEARING

# Cleansing Our Consciousness Through Sound

*Spiritual sound enters the ears to purify the heart.*

by Dvārakādhīśa Devī Dāsī

*In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.5.23–24), the devotee Prahlāda Mahārāja, a great spiritual authority, says, “Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia, and pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one’s best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind, and words)—these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated his life to the service of Kṛṣṇa through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge.” Here we begin a series of articles on the nine processes of bhakti-yoga, or devotional service.*

**E**AVESDROPPING ON MY MOTHER’S phone conversations was a favorite pastime of mine as a child. Especially on long, draggy summer afternoons, overhearing her suspicions of my next-door neighbor’s nocturnal adventures really added some much appreciated drama. I would sit silently crouched in the hall, barely breathing, counting on Mom’s absorption in the conversation to keep my presence hidden. From my hiding place I learned about all sorts of diseases, about really hideous home decoration, and about the evil combination

of alcohol and office parties. I heard extensive analysis of soap opera plots. I heard a side of Roman Catholic doctrine the nuns had completely neglected. In short, I entered the world of adulthood through my ears.

So many things in life begin this way, through sound. Before we learn and speak a language, we hear it. Before we build a skyscraper, we discuss the plans. Through sound, we understand and share feelings. We sell diet sodas with thirty-second sound bites.

The sounds we hear shape our awareness and understanding of the world and the

Photo by Bhārgava Dāsa

# *Spiritual sound is so powerful that one doesn't even have to comprehend its meaning to benefit from hearing it.*

• • •

people around us. We tend to be preoccupied with thinking about the things we hear about most. The sounds we allow to penetrate our consciousness play an enormous role in our experience of life.

Sound also plays a major role in shaping our spiritual consciousness. Consider the beautiful hymns that have enhanced church services for centuries; the sermons, bringing the words of scripture into relevant and personal focus; the murmur of prayers counted on beads in various traditions.

## THE SOUND OF MANTRAS

Hearing spiritual sounds is a powerful way to purify our consciousness and awaken our love for God. One type of spiritual sound we can hear is mantras. The Vedic scriptures recommend the chanting of mantras to elevate the consciousness. A mantra can be a single word or phrase, or it can be longer. Sanctioned by a spiritual authority, it is repeated and heard with reverential attention. *Mantra* literally means “to free the mind,” and the purpose of mantras is to clear the mind by focusing on spiritual sound.

Five hundred years ago, Lord Kṛṣṇa descended to earth as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to promote the chanting of the mahā-mantra (“great mantra”): Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that the mahā-mantra is a calling out to God: “Dear Lord, please engage me in Your service.”

Spiritual sound is so powerful that one doesn't even have to comprehend its meaning to benefit from hearing it. “When one links his ears to give aural reception to the transcendental vibrations,” Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “he can quickly become purified and cleansed in the heart.” Hearing in

bhakti-yoga is so simple that anyone can take part. “Even a child can take part,” Prabhupāda observes. “Even a dog can take part.”

Yet hearing is a challenge for someone like me, with a racing mind and limited attention span. I strain for some added divine revelations. I expect the presence of God in some awe-inspiring way. I wait for a spiritual payoff.

I know, though, that I have to be patient. The ancient Sanskrit texts explain that our material desires hinder the benefits of hearing spiritual sounds, so we may not perceive profound results right away. But when we're free of material desires, the sound of God's name invokes deep transcendental joy in the heart. If I'm not experiencing that joy, I can understand that my heart is congested with material contaminants.

The heart's contaminants are things we love more than the service of the Lord. Fortunately, hearing spiritual sound starts the cleansing of the heart. In the beginning, spiritual hearing might feel like a chore. We're like a jaundiced person who tastes sugar as bitter. As the disease regresses, however, the natural sweet taste returns. Similarly, as one continues hearing, all the accumulated contaminants in the heart gradually dissolve.

In my case, cleansing the heart is quite a formidable task. But I know that spiritual hearing gradually loosens the knot of material attachment and simultaneously encourages the flow of love for the Supreme Lord.

We can hear spiritual sound in various forms. For example, we can hear the mahā-mantra when we sit in solitude and chant on beads. Or we can hear it with others, such as when singing together (*kīrtana*). The words of the mahā-mantra are simple. We should try to hear them attentively and with respect, since they are the names of the Lord.

## HEARING SCRIPTURE

Transcendental hearing can also take the form of reading or listening to the recitation of scriptures, such as *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, which contains Kṛṣṇa's own words and Śrīla Prabhupāda's enlightened commentary.

I'd like to relate an example from my own life of the benefit of hearing the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Many years ago I was once delighted to receive as a gift a lovely pale green and lavender sari. It was the nicest sari I had ever owned. I washed it with care and hung it outside on the clothesline to dry. Meanwhile, I went inside and studied a verse from the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18:54):

“One who is thus transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me.”

I had heard the verse many times, and that day I was merely trying to memorize it. Nevertheless, I was pondering the phrase “never laments or desires to have anything” when it was time to fetch my new sari from the clothesline. As I walked outside, I wondered if I could ever be free from lamentation and desire.

Just then, I spotted my sari. The wind had blown it up against a fence that enclosed a dog. The dog had seized the edge of the sari and dragged it through the fence, playfully ripping it to shreds. My eyes filled with tears. My new sari! But just as quickly I thought of that verse—no lamentation! no desire!—and had to laugh a bit at the way Kṛṣṇa had revealed my attachment to a piece of cloth.

When we regularly hear the scriptures, we get many opportunities to apply the teachings and increase our

(please turn page)

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realization. (My story of the sari, trivial as it might seem, doesn't end there. Several years later, a friend returned from India and brought me a sari. Against all odds, it was the same color and pattern as the destroyed sari.)

## PERFECTION THROUGH HEARING

Ultimately, spiritual hearing—like all the nine processes of bhakti-yoga—can lead to perfection. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, a direct disciple of Lord Caitanya, mentions nine persons, each of whom became perfect through one of the nine processes of bhakti-yoga. For the process of hearing, that person was Mahārāja Parīkṣit. A powerful king in ancient times, Mahārāja Parīkṣit was

cursed to die within seven days. Although enormously wealthy and powerful, he chose to live his last days hearing about transcendental knowledge from the sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

Maharaja Parīkṣit retired to the bank of the Ganges River. Sensing the importance of the exchange, many sages also came to hear. As Śukadeva Gosvāmī spoke, the great king Parīkṣit listened submissively and became completely purified.

While hearing spiritual sound even without comprehension is beneficial, hearing transforms into realization when we comprehend and act accordingly. As we saturate our consciousness with spiritual sound, we restore our understanding of ourselves in relation to the world, to other people around us, and to God. This under-

standing protects us from the pain of natural calamity, be it ripped saris or broken hearts, and helps us be of real value in the lives of others.

A friend related a story to me about how her daughters used the wisdom of the *Bhagavad-gītā* to soften the blow of a pet's death. As they buried the animal, the youngest girl stood quietly weeping. Her older sister turned to her with dismay and quoted *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.30): "He who dwells in the body can never be slain. Therefore you need not grieve for any living being." Everyone, even a child, can hear, comprehend, and explain to others. ❀

*Dvārakādhiṣa Devī Dāsī is a frequent contributor to Back to Godhead. She and her family are part of the Hare Kṛṣṇa community in Alachua, Florida.*

## BECOME IMMORTAL

(continued from page 9)

important. *Tattva* means "truth." In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find:

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas  
tattvaṁ yaj-jñānam advayam  
brahmeti paramātmēti  
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

"Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramātmā, or Bhagavān." Bhagavān is the last word in *tattva*, the Supreme Truth. Therefore, when Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks in *Bhagavad-*

*gītā*, Vyāsadeva writes, *śrī bhagavān uvāca*: "The Supreme Personality of Godhead said." Vyāsadeva is saying, "Although I am writing this, I am not the speaker. The speaker is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The authority is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, not I."

Modern so-called philosophers, scientists, and scholars say, "I think. I think." But what is the value of their opinion? Great personalities do not speak like that. Even Kṛṣṇa says, *tattva-darśibhiḥ*: "It has been concluded by higher authorities." That is the way of understanding. In the modern age we

also sometimes give reference by saying that such-and-such professor says such-and-such. But these "authorities" are not *tattva-darśibhiḥ*, seers of the truth. They are all speculators.

We have to go to the seers of the truth. Lord Kṛṣṇa says,

*tad viddhi praṇipātena  
paripraśnena sevayā  
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ  
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth." You should understand this word: *tattva-darśinaḥ*, seers of the truth. They are authoritative; others are not. Others simply speculate.

Speculation takes place on the mental platform; it has no value. Just as this body is nonpermanent, the mind is also flickering—accepting something and rejecting something. That is the mind's business. So the mind cannot be *tattva-darśi*. Of course, we have to think with the mind, but under the direction of authority. Then we can reach real *tattva*, truth. And Bhagavān, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the last word in *tattva*.

Thank you very much. ❀

You're Invited!

## The Sunday Feast

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. You're invited to join in the festival of music, dance, and spiritual discourse and then sharing hearty plates of savories, sweets, and vegetable extravaganzas. Come by and relish the taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast. (See "Centers," page 59.)



# Tangible Proof?

*Do we need old stones and bones  
to verify the Vedic view of history?*

by Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

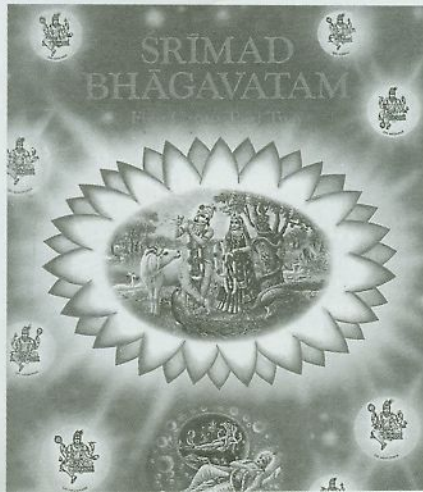
**W**ERE OUR ANCESTORS ape-like beings, hunters by nature who gradually learned to plow the field? Or were they highly civilized, advanced both technologically and spiritually? What is the real story of human history?

The *Vedas* and their supplements assert that human beings today descended from far superior human beings and that people have lived in materially and spiritually refined societies for millions of years. If we are indeed heirs to a greater culture of the past, scientifically objective evidence of that culture should be available. But is it?

Some evidence is available, but scholars tend to disagree on what it proves. Their debates have been going on for some time, usually fueled by biases.

For example, when Europeans were trying to conquer India economically and politically, they also often sought religious and social conquest. Many if not most of the early scholars who studied the available scientific evidence—language, histories, ancient ruins—did so to discredit the Vedic view of history.

Today, linguists, astronomers, archaeologists, and other scientists disagree about the validity of Vedic history. Some use the same evidence as the earlier European scholars, as well as new finds, to confirm the Vedic view. They point to ancient ruins of sophisticated planned cities such as Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, both with advanced sanitary systems. Some authorities claim to have found sacrificial altars like those described in the *Vedas*. Dissenters say that the ruins are very



## “Vedic”: The *Vedas* and More

SCHOLARS OFTEN restrict the meaning of the term “Vedic” to that which relates only to four original *Vedas*—*R̥g*, *Sāma*, *Yajur*, and *Atharva*—and the period in which they assume they appeared. Authorities within the tradition itself, however, usually expand the meaning to include not only the *Vedas* but their corollaries as well. They give the corollaries at least equal status to the *Vedas* and refer to them as Vedic literature. Following are some references to support that view:

“One should expand and accept the meaning of the *Vedas* with the help of the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*. The *Vedas* are afraid of being mistreated by one who is ignorant of the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*.” (*Mahābhārata*, *Ādi* 1.267)

“I consider the message of the *Purāṇas* to be more important than that of the *Vedas*. All that is in the *Vedas* is in the *Purāṇas* without a doubt.” (*Nāradiya Purāṇa*)

“I consider the *Purāṇas* equal to the *Vedas*. . . . The *Vedas* feared that their purport would be distorted by inattentive listening, but their purport was established long ago by the *Itihāsas* and *Purāṇas*. What is not found in the *Vedas* is found in the *smṛtis*. And what is not found in either is described in the *Purāṇas*. A person who knows the four *Vedas* along with the *Upaniṣads* but who does not know the *Purāṇas* is not very learned.” (*Skanda Purāṇa*, *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa*)

Finally, the *Bṛhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* (4.5.11) states: “The *R̥g Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, *Atharva Veda*, *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas*, *Upaniṣads*, verses and mantras chanted by *brāhmaṇas*, *sūtrās* [compilations of Vedic statements], as well as transcendental knowledge and the explanations of the *sūtras* and mantras—all emanate from the breathing of the great Personality of Godhead.”

different from any described in ancient India’s sacred writings. The writings must have come from elsewhere and become part of or replaced the culture of India’s indigenous people.

With modern geological instruments, some scientists are certain they have found the course of a mighty river that corresponds to the Sarasvatī, described in the *R̥g Veda* and the *Mahābhārata*. Others say the Sarasvatī would have been much smaller. Still others say it never existed.

Scholars recognize Sanskrit, the language of the *Vedas*, as one of the oldest languages in the world. Linguists debate whether Sanskrit originated in India, was imported, or developed from some unknown, older language.

Others debate whether the sages and scriptures of India originated complex astronomy and mathematics or borrowed them from other cultures, such as Greece and Egypt.

Scholars agree that ruins, artifacts,

and so on, show that some type of advanced civilization existed in India at least five thousand years ago. But they disagree on whether the evidence confirms descriptions in scriptures such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

### EMPIRICAL LIMITS

Unfortunately, relying on empirical evidence can never yield a definite conclusion about the events of the distant past. We can rely on empirical evidence to make many decisions in our present lives, but it may not be helpful—and can be harmful—when reaching conclusions about the past. Why? Because the empirical method of gaining knowledge relies on the human being’s senses, mind, and reasoning ability, which are limited and therefore limit our access to knowledge.

Let’s consider some of these limitations. The apparatus of the human body can’t detect all stimuli. For example,

dogs can hear and smell things we can’t. And to avoid mental overload, our mind filters perception; we delete much of our incoming sensory experience. We also generalize about what we perceive, allowing us to recognize an unusual chair as a chair. Yet such generalizing, which usually entails putting things into preconceived categories, greatly limits our ability to discover truth. Finally, we distort our perceptions according to our deep biases and beliefs. Often our beliefs are so deep-rooted we don’t know on what premises we are forming conclusions.

Researchers Postman and Bruner performed a psychological experiment that serves as an excellent illustration of the difficulty we face when confronting evidence that contradicts our beliefs and experience. The researchers flashed regular playing cards at experimental subjects, but mixed with the cards were strange cards, such as red spades and black hearts. The testers gradually increased the time the subjects could see each card. In the beginning, after a short exposure to each card no one noticed the strange cards. They just saw it as something else—a normal card. For example, when shown a black four of hearts (no such thing), they would, without hesitation, call it a four of spades or hearts.

As the time to see the cards increased, most of the subjects gradually realized that there were other categories of cards. At first they would hesitate in their identification and then finally recognize the new type. Once they identified the new type, they could continue to spot similar cards. But more than ten percent of the subjects were never able to identify the strange cards—even at forty times the average exposure time needed to recognize normal cards for what they were. They would sometimes feel acute distress upon seeing those strange cards, but didn’t make the mental leap to understand that there was another category beyond their original bias and expectation.

### BIAS FILTERS

So we perceive what we want or expect to perceive. Unfortunately, many scholars or scientists think that  
(please turn to page 53)



The

# LIFE

of the

# FUNERAL

*“As I look at her lifeless body in the casket,  
I think of her good fortune for having unknowingly  
served Lord Kṛṣṇa in the last months of her life.”*

by Arcana-siddhī Devī Dāsī

AS I ENTER THE CHURCH, I survey the large crowd while looking for a vacant seat towards the back. Just as I spy an inconspicuous seat, Mrs. Williams\* sees me from the front of the church. I wave to her as I try to jostle my way to the seat I have found. But she emphatically motions for me to come to the front.

Mrs. Williams, a strong matriarchal figure, is not a person to easily challenge. I obediently approach her and give her a hug, hoping she will allow me to return to the back pews. Instead she makes room in the front row for me to sit next to her grandson Thomas. She looks up at me.

I sit and quietly squirm a little. It's not just that I have white skin in the midst of a mostly black-skinned congregation. And who will know that I am a Jewish-born Vaiṣṇava, a Hare Kṛṣṇa practitioner sitting down for a

---

\* For confidentiality, the names in this article have been changed.

# *Our agreement on scripture diverges when the reverend states that this one life determines our eternal existence in either heaven or hell.*



Baptist service? The problem is that I knew the deceased only in my capacity as a psychotherapist for a large urban health clinic. Do I really belong with her immediate family in the front pew?

Now as people file by to offer their condolences, I am included as part of the family. I feel uncomfortable as people shake my hand and offer words of sympathy. The awkward moment ends as the organ begins to resonate throughout the church and people take their seats.

Just a few feet away in the open casket is the body of Thomas's mother, Regina Scott. Her motionless body lies on silken pillows, dressed in white lace. Stuffed animals nestle close to her body, creating an illusion of serenity and everlasting peace.

## **REGINA'S LIFE**

I had met Regina on a few occasions when she came to family therapy. She had recently been released from prison and had come to live with Thomas and his grandmother. Thomas hardly knew his mother, since she had been in jail for a good portion of his life. During her short interludes of freedom over the years, she would go back to using heroin. To support her habit, she would turn to drug-selling and prostitution, which led to repeated arrests and incarcerations. Either from dirty needles or prostitution, Regina had contracted the HIV virus several years ago. For the past two years, she had suffered from a series of AIDS-related illnesses and had resigned herself to dying.

Regina left behind three children. Leon, her oldest, is an angry fifteen-year-old who already has several charges for drug sales and car theft. He sits incognito in a pew several rows back.

Thomas, her second child, a small,

sensitive twelve-year-old, suffers from anxiety and depression. He had been referred for mental health therapy two years ago after placing a rope around his neck and saying he wanted to die. I had become Thomas's therapist then and had worked closely with the family ever since.

Troy, the youngest child, was born HIV positive two years ago, while Regina was still in jail. He has already surpassed the doctor's predictions for his life span. Today he is dressed in a little tuxedo and flops about in his baby chair, having no muscle control left in his body. He is a lovable, good-natured child and almost seems to have transcended his suffering.

I hold Thomas's warm and moist hand. Tears roll incessantly down his cheeks, forming little rivulets and puddles on his black dress pants. I pass some tissues to him, but they remain immobile in his hand. He stares off in a hypnotic state, his body frozen in time.

Several ministers ascend to the pulpit, dressed in long, flowing black gowns. This is my first time at a Baptist funeral service, and I'm eager to hear their message.

## **ONLY ONE LIFE?**

In a deep commanding voice, the first reverend asks everyone who accepts Jesus to stand. I have no problem sincerely standing up. Through the teachings of Vaiṣṇava philosophy, I accept Jesus as a pure devotee of God who descended to teach love of God to the fallen. Many times I have heard or read of my guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda, glorifying Jesus Christ. Sometimes, though, he found fault in the way Jesus's followers misconstrued his teachings.

The reverend expounds on many truths consistent with my Vaiṣṇava philosophy. The soul and the body are

different. Life is a journey meant for loving God and helping others do the same. Most of what I hear could well have been spoken in a *Bhagavad-gītā* class in a Vaiṣṇava temple.

Our agreement on scripture diverges when the reverend states that this one life determines our eternal existence in either heaven or hell. This is one of the tenets of modern Christianity that never sat well with me. If indeed this is our only chance, why does God allow so much inequity at birth? Why is one child born to a loving, nurturing, comfortable home while another child's home is an abusive, impoverished hell? Why would one have the opportunity to learn about God from childhood and another have no religious training? And if the child is sinless, as the Christians believe, then would it not be in the child's best interest to be killed at birth so he could go straight to heaven?

Why would God give us only one chance and eternally damn us? As a parent I watch my own child make mistake after mistake, yet I continue to stand by him and encourage him. God is infinitely more loving. Surely He would continue to help us beyond this one brief lifetime.

I soon sense that the good reverend is struggling with how to present the concept of one lifetime, heaven or hell, in this particular situation. He wants to comfort the family and loved ones. That usually comes from hearing that the dear departed has gone to heaven. Plainly, Regina's life up until the end was less than saintly. To say she had accepted Christ and purified her heart would have been quite a stretch.

Surely the reverend wonders what kind of a message he would impart by blessing Regina as heaven-bound. The young people in attendance would simply take this as an endorsement

*(please turn to page 55)*



# A SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE ON FAMILIAL LOVE

*Since we're not these bodies, is it wrong to love our families?*

by Dhyāna-kuṇḍa Devī Dāsī

**I** EDIT AND TRANSLATE for the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust in Sweden, where we often receive letters from people with questions about what they've read in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. I've found that many readers have similar questions, especially when it comes to applying the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their lives. I compiled the following letter and reply with the hope of assisting BTG readers who may have the same questions.

(Letter:)

I have doubts about the way the self is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Theologically, it makes good sense: we are eternal, we live many times to burn away our karma and advance toward God, and so on. But when I try to apply this understanding to personal relationships, it strikes me as dry and opposed to individuality and love.

I have a husband and two daughters, aged three years and eight months. These three

“living entities,” as you would call them, are so different from one another. It's hard for me to believe that our bodies and minds don't count, that we are ultimately all the same. It's even harder to accept that spiritually we are strangers to each other and that our human feelings and relationships have a negative value—since the goal of life is to give up this “false material affection.” I'd appreciate some guidance on all this.

*My Reply*

You are probably referring to the second chapter of the *Gīta*, where Kṛṣṇa imparts to Arjuna His very first lesson: the difference between body and soul, matter and spirit. First lessons tend to present things as simply as possible, and since they reveal a new aspect of reality, they may seem to oppose our current understanding. But by deeply studying the new lessons, reflecting on them, and resolving doubts—just as you are doing—we can find a

Illustration by Yamarāja Dāsa

synthesis between our old thinking and the new knowledge.

Kṛṣṇa's first point is that the soul, or the self, is different from the body. So He draws the contrast: the self is undying, unchanging, immovable, invisible, inconceivable. To integrate this picture with the richness of personal traits we value in ourselves and others is difficult indeed. But there is more to the self than these negatives.

As you watch your baby encounter her reflection in the mirror, become fascinated by it, smile to it, and try to crawl behind the mirror to find "the other child," you can observe such attributes of the soul as consciousness, individuality, the tendency to seek pleasure, and need for interaction with other persons. These are all fundamental qualities of the spirit. In yourself, watching your child, you may experience another spiritual quality: the desire to love and serve.

No two souls are the same. But all have the same basic nature, no matter what kind of body they occupy. Therefore, "The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle *brāhmaṇa*, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 5.18)

Our bodies and minds do count; nothing in the creation is devoid of

purpose. The body is the expression of the self, or of where one is on the long journey of self-realization. The Supersoul in the heart, accompanying us—the soul—from one life to another, grants us new bodies that help fulfill our desires and offer opportunities to advance spiritually.

## NOT BY CHANCE

It is not by chance that one receives a human body and mind, capable of introspection and free choice of action. Our karma puts us into the body of a man or a woman, but there are lessons to be learned there, as there are in being born poor or rich, or in having happy relationships or unhappy ones. All living beings, whether or not they profess interest in God, are treading the path of God realization, each in his or her own unique way. "Everyone follows My path in all respects," says Kṛṣṇa. (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11)

For some people God is a stranger. Their affection rests solely in those with whom they have a bodily relationship—parents, spouse, children—even though all bodily connections are temporary. What connects us *all* and makes us *all* lovable is that we are all integral parts of the spirit Whole. On the deepest level of our nature, we are servants

and lovers of God.

Then is love for the family wrong? No. If we have come together in this life as a family, it is not just so that we can mechanically "burn away our karma." Our paths of self-realization have crossed; we have something to give to or learn from one another.

Rediscovering our personal relationship with God does not mean we become strangers to one another. We won't run out of love by loving God. Kṛṣṇa Himself condemns the mentality of those who worship His Deity in temples but fail to see everyone as part of Him.

## EXPRESSING LOVE

Genuine love—a selfless desire to assist another person in his or her spiritual development—can be expressed through the body. As a mother, you know that young children need love expressed through bodily contact in order to grow into emotionally balanced adults. Without emotional balance, children will find any spiritual practice difficult. But when they discover their individuality and begin to search for their own meaning in life, to trample upon this need in the name of bodily relationship ("You're *my* child; I know what's best for you!") would be unloving. And it would be even more unloving to shrug one's shoulders and say, "I don't care what you do. You're not my child, after all; we're strangers. Just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa!"

We don't develop spiritually by either indiscriminately following our needs and feelings (or those of others) or stifling them if we decide they're material. Needs and feelings are a driving force, and we can use their energy to move closer to God. Exactly how to use that energy we have to learn by introspection, guidance, and the examples of spiritually elevated persons. ☀

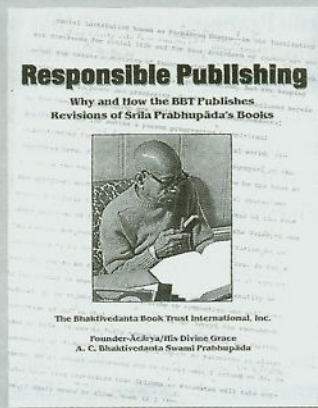
*Dhyāna-kunḍa Devī Dāsī, originally from Poland, joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in 1987. She and her husband live at the ISKCON farm in Almviks Gard, Sweden, where she serves as an English editor and Polish translator for the north European branch of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.*

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# THE PRICE OF IGNORANCE

*Lord Kapila, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, describes the suffering caused by the soul's identification with the body.*

## CANTO 3: CHAPTER 31

28 इत्येवं शैशवं भुक्त्वा दुःखं पौगण्डमेव च ।  
अलब्धामीप्सितोऽज्ञानादिद्वमन्युः शुचार्पितः॥२८॥

*ity evaṁ śaiśavam bhuktvā  
duḥkhaṁ paugaṇḍam eva ca  
alabdhamīpsito 'jñānād  
iddha-manyuḥ śucārpitaḥ*

*iti evam*—in this way; *śaiśavam*—childhood; *bhuktvā*—having undergone; *duḥkham*—distress; *paugaṇḍam*—boyhood; *eva*—even; *ca*—and; *alabdha*—not achieved; *abhīpsitaḥ*—he whose desires; *ajñānāt*—due to ignorance; *iddha*—kindled; *manyuḥ*—his anger; *śucā*—by sorrow; *arpitaḥ*—overcome.

**In this way, the child passes through his childhood, suffering different kinds of distress, and attains boyhood. In boyhood also he suffers pain over desires to get things he can never achieve. And thus, due to ignorance, he becomes angry and sorry.**

**PURPORT:** From birth to the end of five years of age is called childhood. After five years up to the end of the fifteenth year is called *paugaṇḍa*. At sixteen years of age, youth begins. The distresses of childhood are already explained, but when the child attains boyhood he is en-

rolled in a school which he does not like. He wants to play, but he is forced to go to school and study and take responsibility for passing examinations. Another kind of distress is that he wants to get some things with which to play, but circumstances may be such that he is not able to attain them, and he thus becomes aggrieved and feels pain. In one word, he is unhappy, even in his boyhood, just as he was unhappy in his childhood, what to speak of youth. Boys are apt to create so many artificial demands for playing, and when they do not attain satisfaction they become furious with anger, and the result is suffering.

29 सह देहेन मानेन वर्धमानेन मन्युना ।  
करोति विग्रहं कामी कामिष्वन्ताय चात्मनः ॥२९॥

*saha dehena mānena  
vardhamānena manyunā  
karoti vighraṁ kāmī  
kāmiṣv antāya cātmanaḥ*

*saha*—with; *dehena*—the body; *mānena*—with false prestige; *vardhamānena*—increasing; *manyunā*—on account of anger; *karoti*—he creates; *vighraṁ*—enmity; *kāmī*—the lusty person; *kāmiṣu*—towards other lusty people; *antāya*—for destruction; *ca*—and; *ātmanaḥ*—of his soul.

**With the growth of the body, the living entity, in order to vanquish his soul, increases his false prestige and anger and thereby creates enmity towards similarly lusty people.**

PURPORT: In *Bhagavad-gītā*, Third Chapter, verse 36, Arjuna inquired from Kṛṣṇa about the cause of a living being's lust. It is said that a living entity is eternal and, as such, qualitatively one with the Supreme Lord. Then what is the reason he falls prey to the material and commits so many sinful activities by the influence of the material energy? In reply to this question, Lord Kṛṣṇa said that it is lust which causes a living entity to glide down from his exalted position to the abominable condition of material existence. This lust circumstantially changes into anger. Both lust and anger stand on the platform of the mode of passion. Lust is actually the product of the mode of passion, and in the absence of satisfaction of lust, the same desire transforms into anger on the platform of ignorance. When ignorance covers the soul, it is the source of his degradation to the most abominable condition of hellish life.

To raise oneself from hellish life to the highest position of spiritual understanding is to transform this lust into love of Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, a great *ācārya* of the Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*, said, *kāma kṛṣṇa-karmārpaṇe*: due to our lust, we want many things for our sense gratification, but the same lust can be transformed in a purified way so that *we want everything for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead*. Anger also can be utilized towards a person who is atheistic or who is envious of the Personality of Godhead. As we have fallen into this material existence because of our lust and anger, the same two qualities can be utilized for the purpose of advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and one can elevate himself again to his former pure, spiritual position. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has therefore recommended that because in material existence we have so many objects of sense gratification, which we need for the maintenance of the body, we should use all of them without attachment, for the purpose of satisfying the senses of Kṛṣṇa; that is actual renunciation.

30 भूतैः पञ्चमिरारब्धे देहे देहबुधोऽसकृत् ।  
अहंममेत्यसद्ग्राहः करोति कुमतिर्मतिम् ॥३०॥

*bhūtaiḥ pañcabhir ārabdhe  
dehe dehy abudho 'sakṛt  
aham mamety asad-grāhaḥ  
karoti kumatir matim*

*bhūtaiḥ*—by material elements; *pañcabhiḥ*—five; *ārabdhe*—made; *dehe*—in the body; *dehī*—the living entity; *abudhaḥ*—ignorant; *asakṛt*—constantly; *aham*—I; *mama*—mine; *iti*—thus; *asad*—nonpermanent things; *grāhaḥ*—accepting; *karoti*—he does; *ku-matiḥ*—being foolish; *matim*—thought.

**By such ignorance the living entity accepts the material body, which is made of five elements, as himself. With this misunderstanding, he accepts nonpermanent things as his own and increases his ignorance in the darkest region.**

PURPORT: The expansion of ignorance is explained in this verse. The first ignorance is to identify one's material body, which is made of five elements, as the self, and the second is to accept something as one's own due to a bodily connection. In this way, ignorance expands. The living entity is eternal, but because of his accepting nonpermanent things, misidentifying his interest, he is put into ignorance, and therefore he suffers material pangs.

31 तदर्थं कुरुते कर्म यद्बद्धो याति संसृतिम् ।  
योऽनुयाति ददत्क्लेशमविद्याकर्मबन्धनः ॥३१॥

*tad-artham kurute karma  
yad-baddho yāti saṁsṛtim  
yo 'nuyāti dadat kleśam  
avidyā-karma-bandhanaḥ*

*tad-artham*—for the sake of the body; *kurute*—he performs; *karma*—actions; *yad-baddhaḥ*—bound by which; *yāti*—he goes; *saṁsṛtim*—to repeated birth and death; *yah*—which body; *anuyāti*—follows; *dadat*—giving; *kleśam*—misery; *avidyā*—by ignorance; *karma*—by fruitive activities; *bandhanaḥ*—the cause of bondage.

**For the sake of the body, which is a source of constant trouble to him and which follows him because he is bound by ties of ignorance and fruitive activities, he performs various actions which cause him to be subjected to repeated birth and death.**

PURPORT: In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that one has to work to satisfy Yajña, or Viṣṇu, for any work done without the purpose of satisfying the Supreme Personality of Godhead is a cause of bondage. In the conditioned state a living entity, accepting his body as himself, forgets his eternal relationship with the Supreme personality of Godhead and acts on the interest of his body. He takes the body as himself, his bodily expansions as his kinsmen, and the land from which his body is born as worshipable. In this way he performs all sorts of misconceived activities, which lead to his perpetual bondage in repetition of birth and death in various species.

In modern civilization, the so-called social, national, and government leaders mislead people more and more, under the bodily conception of life, with the result that all the leaders, with their followers, are gliding down to hellish conditions birth after birth. An example is given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Andhā yathāndhair upaniyamānāḥ*: when a blind man leads several other blind men, the result is that all of them fall down in a ditch. This is actually happening. There are many leaders to lead the ignorant public, but because every one of them is bewildered by the bodily conception of life, there is no peace and prosperity in human society. So-called yogis who perform various bodily feats are also in the same category as such ignorant people

because the *haṭha-yoga* system is especially recommended for persons who are grossly implicated in the bodily conception. The conclusion is that as long as one is fixed in the bodily conception, he has to suffer birth and death.

32 यद्यसद्भिः पथि पुनः शिशोदरकृतोद्यमैः ।  
आस्थितो रमते जन्तुस्तमो विशति पूर्ववत् ॥३२॥

*yady asadbhiḥ pathi punaḥ  
śiśnodara-kṛtodyamaiḥ  
āsthito ramate jantus  
tamo viśati pūrvavat*

*yady*—if; *asadbhiḥ*—with the unrighteous; *pathi*—on the path; *punaḥ*—again; *śiśna*—for the genitals; *udara*—for the stomach; *kṛta*—done; *udyamaiḥ*—whose endeavors; *āsthitaḥ*—associating; *ramate*—enjoys; *jantus*—the living entity; *tamaḥ*—darkness; *viśati*—enters; *pūrvavat*—as before.

**If, therefore, the living entity again associates with the path of unrighteousness, influenced by sensually minded people engaged in the pursuit of sexual enjoyment and the gratification of the palate, he again goes to hell as before.**

PURPORT: It has been explained that the conditioned soul is put into the Andha-tāmisra and Tāmisra hellish conditions, and after suffering there he gets a hellish body like the dog's or hog's. After several such births, he again comes into the form of a human being. How the human being is born is also described by Kapiladeva. The human being develops in the mother's abdomen and suffers there and comes out again. After all these sufferings, if he gets another chance in a human body and wastes his valuable time in the association of persons who are concerned with sexual life and palatable dishes, then naturally he again glides down to the same Andha-tāmisra and Tāmisra hells.

Generally, people are concerned with the satisfaction of the tongue and the satisfaction of the genitals. That is material life. Material life means eat, drink, be merry, and enjoy, with no concern for understanding one's spiritual identity and the process of spiritual advancement. Since materialistic people are concerned with the tongue, belly, and genitals, if anyone wants to advance in spiritual life he must be very careful about associating with such people. To associate with such materialistic men is to commit purposeful suicide in the human form of life. It is said, therefore, that an intelligent man should give up such undesirable association and should always mix with saintly persons. When he is in association with saintly persons, all his doubts about the spiritual expansion of life are eradicated, and he makes tangible progress on the path of spiritual understanding. It is also sometimes found that people are very much addicted to a particular type of religious faith. Hindus, Muslims, and Christians are faithful in their particular type of religion,

and they go to the church, temple, or mosque, but unfortunately they cannot give up the association of persons who are too much addicted to sex life and satisfaction of the palate. Here it is clearly said that one may officially be a very religious man, but if he associates with such persons, then he is sure to slide down to the darkest region of hell.

33 सत्यं शौचं दया मौनं बुद्धिः श्रीर्हीर्यशः क्षमा ।  
शमो दमो भगश्चेति यत्सङ्गाद्याति सङ्ख्यम् ॥३३॥

*satyaṁ śaucaṁ dayā maunaṁ  
buddhiḥ śrīr hrīr yaśaḥ kṣamā  
śamo damo bhagaś ceti  
yat-saṅgād yāti saṅkṣayam*

*satyam*—truthfulness; *śaucam*—cleanliness; *dayā*—mercy; *maunam*—gravity; *buddhiḥ*—intelligence; *śrīḥ*—prosperity; *hrīḥ*—shyness; *yaśaḥ*—fame; *kṣamā*—forgiveness; *śamaḥ*—control of the mind; *damaḥ*—control of the senses; *bhagaḥ*—fortune; *ca*—and; *iti*—thus; *yat-saṅgāt*—from association with whom; *yāti saṅkṣayam*—are destroyed.

**He becomes devoid of truthfulness, cleanliness, mercy, gravity, spiritual intelligence, shyness, austerity, fame, forgiveness, control of the mind, control of the senses, fortune and all such opportunities.**

PURPORT: Those who are too addicted to sex life cannot understand the purpose of the Absolute Truth, nor can they be clean in their habits, not to mention showing mercy to others. They cannot remain grave, and they have no interest in the ultimate goal of life. The ultimate goal of life is Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, but those who are addicted to sex life cannot understand that their ultimate interest is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such people have no sense of decency, and even in public streets or public parks they embrace each other just like cats and dogs and pass it off in the name of love-making. Such unfortunate creatures can never become materially prosperous. Behavior like that of cats and dogs keeps them in the position of cats and dogs. They cannot improve any material condition, not to speak of becoming famous. Such foolish persons may even make a show of so-called yoga, but they are unable to control the senses and mind, which is the real purpose of yoga practice. Such people can have no opulence in their lives. In a word, they are very unfortunate.

34 तेष्वशान्तेषु मूढेषु खण्डितात्मस्वसाधुषु ।  
सङ्गं न कुर्याच्छोच्येषु योषित्क्रीडाभृगेषु च ॥३४॥

*teṣv aśānteṣu mūḍheṣu  
khaṇḍitātmav asādhuṣu*

*saṅgam na kuryāc chocyeṣu  
yoṣit-kriḍā-mṛgeṣu ca*

*teṣu*—with those; *aśānteṣu*—coarse; *mūḍheṣu*—fools; *khaṇḍita-ātmāsu*—bereft of self-realization; *asādhuṣu*—wicked; *saṅgam*—association; *na*—not; *kuryāt*—one should make; *śocyeṣu*—pitiable; *yoṣit*—of women; *kriḍā-mṛgeṣu*—dancing dogs; *ca*—and.

**One should not associate with a coarse fool who is bereft of the knowledge of self-realization and who is no more than a dancing dog in the hands of a woman.**

PURPORT: The restriction of association with such foolish persons is especially meant for those who are in the line of advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness involves developing the qualities of truthfulness, cleanliness, mercy, gravity, intelligence in spiritual knowledge, simplicity, material opulence, fame, forgiveness, and control of the mind and the senses. All these qualities are to be manifested with the progress of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but if one associates with a *śūdra*, a foolish person who is like a dancing dog in the hands of a woman, then he cannot make any progress. Lord Caitanya has advised that any person who is engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who desires to pass beyond material nescience must not associate himself with women or with persons interested in material enjoyment. For a person seeking advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, such association is more dangerous than suicide.

**35 न तथास्य भवेन्मोहो बन्धश्चान्यप्रसङ्गतः ।  
योषित्सङ्गाद्यथा पुंसो यथा तत्सङ्गिसङ्गतः ॥३५॥**

*na tathāsyā bhaven moho  
bandhaś cānya-prasaṅgataḥ  
yoṣit-saṅgād yathā puṁso  
yathā tat-saṅgi-saṅgataḥ*

*na*—not; *tathā*—in that manner; *asya*—of this man; *bhavaḥ*—may arise; *mohaḥ*—infatuation; *bandhaḥ*—bondage; *ca*—and; *anya-prasaṅgataḥ*—from attachment to any other object; *yoṣit-saṅgāt*—from attachment to women; *yathā*—as; *puṁsaḥ*—of a man; *yathā*—as; *tat-saṅgi*—of men who are fond of women; *saṅgataḥ*—from the fellowship.

**The infatuation and bondage which accrue to a man from attachment to any other object is not as complete as that resulting from attachment to a woman or to the fellowship of men who are fond of women.**

PURPORT: Attachment to women is so contaminating that one becomes attached to the condition of material life not only by the association of women but by the contaminated association of persons who are too attached to them. There

are many reasons for our conditional life in the material world, but the topmost of all such causes is the association of women, as will be confirmed in the following stanzas.

In Kali-yuga, association with women is very strong. In every step of life, there is association with women. If a person goes to purchase something, the advertisements are full of pictures of women. The physiological attraction for women is very great, and therefore people are very slack in spiritual understanding. The Vedic civilization, being based on spiritual understanding, arranges association with women very cautiously. Out of the four social divisions, the members of the first order (namely *brahmacārya*), the third order (*vānaprastha*), and the fourth order (*sannyāsa*) are strictly prohibited from female association. Only in one order, the householder, is there license to mix with women under restricted conditions. In other words, attraction for woman's association is the cause of the material conditional life, and anyone interested in being freed from this conditional life must detach himself from the association of women.

**36 प्रजापतिः स्वां दुहितरं दृष्ट्वा तदूपधर्षितः ।  
रोहिद्भृता सोऽन्वधावदक्षरूपी हतत्रयः ॥३६॥**

*prajāpatiḥ svām duhitaram  
dṛṣṭvā tad-rūpa-dharṣitaḥ  
rohit-bhūtām so 'nvadhāvad  
ṛkṣa-rūpī hata-trapaḥ*

*prajā-patiḥ*—Lord Brahmā; *svām*—his own; *duhitaram*—daughter; *dṛṣṭvā*—having seen; *tad-rūpa*—by her charms; *dharṣitaḥ*—bewildered; *rohit-bhūtām*—to her in the form of a deer; *saḥ*—he; *anvadhāvat*—ran; *ṛkṣa-rūpī*—in the form of a stag; *hata*—bereft of; *trapaḥ*—shame.

**At the sight of his own daughter, Brahmā was bewildered by her charms and shamelessly ran up to her in the form of a stag when she took the form of a hind.**

PURPORT: Lord Brahmā's being captivated by the charms of his daughter and Lord Śiva's being captivated by the Mohinī form of the Lord are specific instances which instruct us that even great demigods like Brahmā and Śiva, what to speak of the ordinary conditioned soul, are captivated by the beauty of woman. Therefore, everyone is advised that one should not freely mix even with one's daughter or mother or sister, because the senses are so strong that when one becomes infatuated, the senses do not consider the relationship of daughter, mother, or sister. It is best, therefore, to practice controlling the senses by performing bhakti-yoga, engaging in the service of Madana-mohana. Lord Kṛṣṇa's name is Madana-mohana, for He can subdue the god Cupid, or lust. Only by engaging in the service of Madana-mohana can one curb the dictates of Madana, Cupid. Otherwise, attempts to control the senses will fail.

(continued in the next issue)





# “Mine”

*The first day of nursery school delivers a lesson for mom.*

by Viśākhā Devī Dāsī

SINCE NURSERY SCHOOL was to be a new experience for our two-year-old, on the first morning I stayed in the school to help her adjust. For a while she clung to me, apprehensive, until she became intrigued by some toys. Finding one she particularly liked, she held it tightly and declared to the other children, “Mine.” As it was clear she was feeling comfortable in the new place, I soon walked home, reflecting on her declaration.

Nothing in that house was hers, yet when she found something that attracted her she decided it was “mine.”

And that’s exactly what I’ve done. I came into this world empty-handed, I’ll leave empty-handed, and in the interim I declare so many things “mine:” “my comfortable three-bedroom home,” “my bright-eyed, curly-haired two-year-old,” “my sleek Power Macintosh.” As possessing that toy gave my daughter a sense of belonging and importance, so thinking that I possess this or that gives me a similar sense.

One may argue, “But that toy wasn’t your daughter’s — she had no right to claim it. Your case is different. You bought your house and computer; you created your family.”

And in one sense, that’s true. But in a higher sense, it’s not. Take our home. I can’t create any of the raw materials—the wood, sand, water, metal—that went into making it. As for

Illustration by Puṣkara Dāsa

the money I contributed toward buying it, whatever talent I used to earn that money also isn't mine because it can be taken away at any moment. If talent or intelligence were actually mine, they couldn't be taken from me. But they can because they are coming from elsewhere—from God, from Lord Kṛṣṇa. And earth, water, and wood are His energies; no person, however powerful, can create these.

Many books of wisdom discourage the tendency to grow attached to what we cannot keep. For example, the *Bhagavad-gītā* says that the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original, supreme creator, proprietor, and enjoyer of all that be. So in fact nothing is mine. Everything is His, and He has kindly allotted me a tiny portion of His possessions.

Even though I take care of "my"

house, family, and money, I can't claim them as my own. I'm like a bank teller, who handles the bank's money but can't claim it. A bank teller who decides, "Oh, I have thousands of dollars at my disposal. Let me use some however I please," is liable to lose everything—job, wages, freedom, and respectability.

Similarly, because I think something is "mine," I'm disturbed by anxiety. I worry that what I have is not enough, or that I may lose it. The very pleasure I sought by acquiring these things eludes me, and on top of that, I stay entrapped in material consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has explained that for personal (as well as national and international) peace we should accept that everything belongs to God, that it is all His to enjoy, and that our function and duty is to use whatever He has allotted us in His service. That realization will free us from hankering and lamenting, and by freeing us of the encumbrance of anxiety, allow us to become happy.

The toy horse my daughter had defiantly claimed that morning was a practically worthless plastic imitation of a real horse. From a spiritual view, the material assets I claim are also valueless. Why? Because, for one, they're temporary. I'll have to leave them behind when I die. But beyond that, when compared to my natural life—an eternal life of bliss and knowledge in the spiritual world—my prize material possessions are inconsequential, unless I use them in the service of Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

In the afternoon, when I went back to pick up my daughter I was a little worried. That tiny horse she'd claimed could have led to tantrums, a big fight, and a frazzled teacher. With relief I learned that shortly after I'd left, my daughter forgot about "her" toy when the teacher had encouraged her to sing with the other children. May I be similarly guided away from "my" things and drawn to Kṛṣṇa and His service. ☀

*Viśākhā Devi Dāsī has been contributing articles and photographs to BTG for more than twenty years. She and her family live in New Dvārakā, the Hare Kṛṣṇa community in Los Angeles.*

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# Independent Insanity

Here we conclude an exchange between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples. It took place in Los Angeles on the morning of December 13, 1973, during a walk along the Pacific shore.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says flatly, *bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasāṁ sarva-loka-maheśvaram/ suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānāṁ jñātvā māṁ śāntiṁ ṛcchati*: “If all you people want to stop this chaotic condition, then accept that I am the enjoyer and proprietor of this whole world and I am your real friend. Let all this business be done on My account. Take your right salaries and

be happy, and there will be no chaotic condition.”

But instead, the situation is that everyone is thinking, “I am the proprietor,” and as far as possible, everyone is hoarding money and other commodities, while leaving other persons to starve. Some are not even getting their right salary, their quota of the basic necessities the Lord has provided. Those who are weak cannot steal. The stronger are stealing.

Now even in everyday affairs there is a fight. For instance, this chaotic condition regarding petrol. The Arabs are thinking, “We are the proprietors of this petrol. Why shall we give a reasonable price to the Americans?” Everything we need for living is already there, but the situation is chaotic, simply because people do not accept that the proprietor is God. This is the defect.

How can your leaders give freedom for this kind of stealing mentality? Tell them, “If you allow freedom for this stealing mentality, that means punishment is awaiting you.”

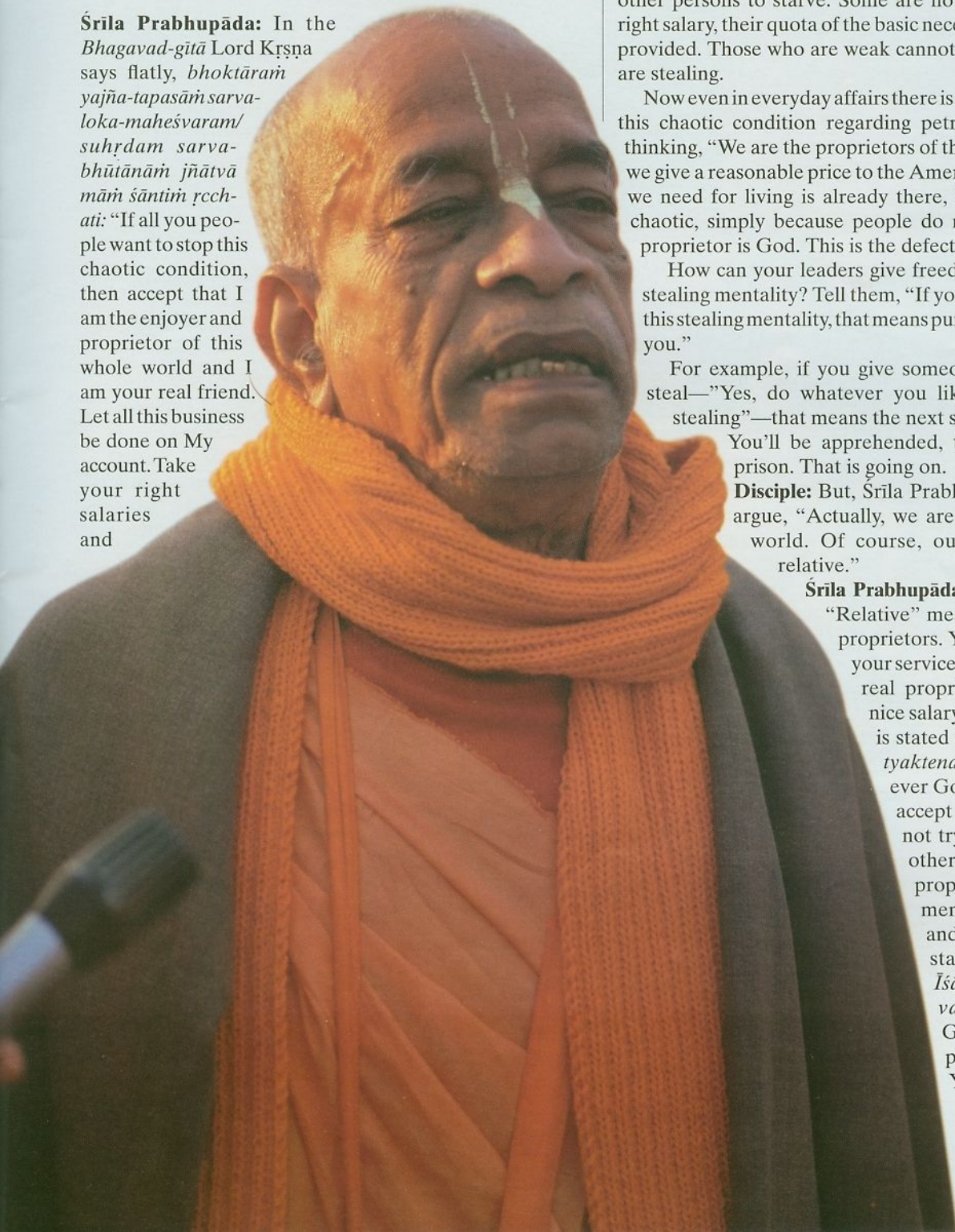
For example, if you give someone the freedom to steal—“Yes, do whatever you like; you can go on stealing”—that means the next stage is punishment.

You’ll be apprehended, tried, and put into prison. That is going on.

**Disciple:** But, Śrīla Prabhupāda, people will argue, “Actually, we are proprietors of this world. Of course, our proprietorship is relative.”

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes, it is relative. “Relative” means you are not the proprietors. You are servants. By your service you must satisfy the real proprietor and get your nice salary and be happy. This is stated in *Īsopaniṣad. Tena tyaktena bhujjithā*: Whatever God gives, you should accept and be happy. Do not try to encroach upon others. Receive from the proprietor your emolument or your reward, and be happy. This is stated in *Īsopaniṣad. Īsāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*: Everything is God’s property; simply take your share. You have that right.

(turn to page 55)





# MILLENNIUM BUGS

## Are You Spiritually Prepared for Disaster?

*If things get bad, you will need more than  
just canned food and safe water.*

by Kālakanṭha Dāsa

**M**ATERIALLY, I DON'T know what to make of the Y2K computer bug. People are spending billions of dollars to stop it, so it's no joke. A homesteader acquaintance says there are too many faulty chips and not enough time. He declares our society to be so computer-dependent that Y2K will be the end of CAWKI—civilization as we know it. A friend who works for IBM laughs and says the Y2K scare is a hoax dreamed up by clever businessmen.

Meanwhile, my local power company sends a reassuring circular saying that they are going to be completely ready for Y2K. They've already fixed their customer information computers, assuring me of accurate billing into the next millennium.

As a family man with two kids, I decide it's prudent to be prepared. Fortunately we live in the country with our own well, garden, and septic system. (What would city folks do without water in the taps and power in the sockets?) My wife and I store a little food and make a list of this and that. Somehow we'll get water. My neighbor is cutting trees, so I stash a year's supply of firewood. Materially, I'm preparing for Y2K as I would for any emergency.

All the while I know this is just an illusion. Materially, neither my family nor I will ever be safe. Even if Y2K turns out to be a hoax, some-

thing else will come along and break up our happy routine.

I don't like the idea of a Y2K computer meltdown. I'm used to inexpensive hot water for bathing and washing dishes and a thermostat in my house. A word processor makes typing incomparably easier. My ten-year-old needs an electric respirator from time to time.

Losing all this on January 1, 2000, would be a disaster for my family and me—and we're better prepared than most. If power, water, food, and gas are unavailable, what will become of our life? Will ravaging, starving gangs of inner-city refugees assault us? Will we be cut off from friends and family who aren't in walking distance? No one can tell me with certainty what will or won't happen.

Although the Y2K scare has put us on alert, the plain, unpalatable fact is that disaster hangs over all of our heads every day. Hurricane? Earthquake? Car crash? Assault? Cancer? Old age? It's only a matter of time until we all confront the loss of this fragile physical frame that has come to mean our very life.

When it comes to the point where my comfortable daily life becomes a harrowing struggle for survival, how will I handle it? My family may be counting on me, not only for material protection, but also for emotional stability and spiritual strength. In this department, platitudes,

Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa

## How to Chant and Be Prepared

SOME PEOPLE confuse repeating God's name with "vain repetition" of materialistic prayers. But God's names differ from other sounds and are spiritually potent and effective for spiritual realization.

Chanting is non-sectarian. One can connect with the Supreme Lord by chanting any of His names. Followers of Islam repeat *Allah Akbar*, "God is great." Catholics repeat prayers on rosary beads. In the '60s story *Franny and Zooey*, one character wants to emulate a monk who always chanted the Jesus prayer. Jesus himself prayed to God, "Hallowed by Thy name."

The *Vedas* also mention many names of God. Repeating such sacred sounds is called mantra meditation. The Sanskrit word *man* means "mind," and *tra* means "to release." Mantras release the mind from anxiety and illusion. They are not the mindlessly repeated dogmatic statements of politicians.

Some popular mantras include *govinda jaya jaya*, *gopāla jaya jaya*; *om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*; and the *mahā*, or great, mantra: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra addresses God in His most

personal aspects as Kṛṣṇa, the all-attractive person, and Rāma, the reservoir of all pleasure. "Hare" (pronounced *ha-ray*) addresses God's devotional energy. Taken together these names mean, "My dear Lord, please let me serve You."

### Guidelines

Although there are no fixed rules for chanting God's names, some guidelines may help. You may prefer to start in a secluded, private place. Early morning is by far the best time for an extended chanting session. (That means early to bed—a good practice in a power failure.) Beads are useful to employ your sense of touch. A beautiful sacred picture or altar will help occupy your sight. Get all this together if you can, but if not, don't worry. Just chant. Ready?

Chant loudly enough to surpass the clatter of your mind. Set your problems completely aside—let them wait—and focus on the sound. At the same time, let your emotions and inner feelings go where they will. Express them in your chanting. If you are in difficulty, let that be an impetus for your chanting. Of course, we are all in difficulty in this world. So let your chanting be, as Śrīla Prabhupāda used to say, "like the genuine cry of a child for its mother."

You'll no doubt undergo some objections from your busy, demanding mind. Keep going. Chant as long as you comfortably can. Though it takes some practice, it is quite common for devotees of Kṛṣṇa to chant for an hour or two daily. Such serious yogis also gradually give up certain activities that pollute the heart and impair chanting. These activities include gambling, intoxication, meat-eating, and recreational sex. Although it may seem rather harsh and difficult to give up such habits, imagine for a moment how unimportant they would seem to you in a Y2K-type emergency where your very survival was at stake.

### Natural and Blissful

For me, chanting is practical. I find that a good morning chanting session always leaves me feeling more prepared in every respect to meet the day's challenges. While chanting I often experience flashes of creativity or insight. But these are by-products of something more important. By chanting God's names, I am aligning myself properly, according to all scriptures, as God's servant. I am glorifying Him, making a joyful noise, and singing His praises. It is blissful, natural, and deeply satisfying to the soul.

generators, or solar panels just don't help. What will?

As with any disaster, I must be prepared—spiritually prepared—to handle Y2K.

### SPIRITUAL PREPAREDNESS

In his books, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in many ways how to be spiritually prepared. Here are some of his points.

Among other things, spiritual preparedness means to assimilate and ap-

ply enough spiritual knowledge to be comfortably detached from external situations. If massive computer crashes or something else beyond my control suddenly and drastically changed my external life, lamenting or ranting would waste precious energy. Nor in an emergency would I be able to cater to the delicate whims of my physical senses.

I can see the value of detachment, of not expecting too much out of my physical life. On one hand, I'm not ready to detach myself like great yogis who leave society and meditate in the heat or cold

of the woods. On the other hand, even now I can begin to understand myself as a spiritual being, distinct from the physical body. I, the soul, am the one who has survived my body's changes from infancy to middle age. And I, the soul, will move on when this body no longer works. This spiritual knowledge is the key to detachment, to keeping a cool head and being content with little.

Spiritual knowledge comes from authentic scriptures. No church or organization can claim exclusive domain on spiritual knowledge, for such wis-

dom is scientific. Just as gravity works the same way for everyone, spiritual science is the same whether I consider myself a Hindu, a Catholic, or a Jew. Though they may differ in style and detail, almost all scriptures agree on essential points of spiritual knowledge. But these days, with so much else to read, scriptures aren't always our first choice. In preparing for Y2K, for instance, my first instinct is to reach for a homesteader catalog.

Although scriptures are the one reliable source of information that can prepare us for disaster, many of us ignore or consider them irrelevant. An otherwise reasonable person may close his eyes, pull some notion out of his mind, and consider it absolute spiritual truth. Genuine scriptures are God's instruction manuals for man. Would you make up your own computer manual and expect to get somewhere?

Rather than getting bogged down with the relative value of various scriptures, let us consider what are the essential, common points of all scriptural knowledge:

- You are not this temporary flesh and blood. You are the eternal soul within.
- This temporary world is not your permanent home.
- A compassionate, understanding God loves you and wants to help you.

If I could fully assimilate and apply these facts in my life—if I could *realize* them—I would be ready for a Y2K meltdown, or any other disaster this world could throw my way. Disaster would neither shock nor intimidate me. If I could then convey the same realization to my friends and family members, I could help them be prepared as well. In fact, I can't think of anyone who wouldn't benefit by this information.

Now is the time for spiritual realization—while the hot water's running and the lights are on and I have the time and the ability. ☸

*Kālakaṇṭha Dāsa writes, runs a small business, and oversees circulation for Back to Godhead. He and his wife, both disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, live with their two children in Gainesville, Florida.*

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# VYĀSADEVA

## The Literary Incarnation of God

*Thousands of years ago he worked to make  
the most important knowledge accessible to us today.*

by Satyarāja Dāsa

**T**HE ANCIENT SAGE Vyāsadeva, or Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, was the divine son of Parāśara Muni and Satyavatī. According to Vaiṣṇava tradition, his main mission was to divide the one original *Veda* into parts (*vyāsa* means “divide”) and write supplementary texts to elucidate its main message: devotion to Kṛṣṇa. The Vedic tradition tells us that prior to Vyāsa’s appearance, some five thousand years ago, people could remember the *Veda* on hearing it once and could understand its implications as well. In our current age, known as Kali-yuga, people have become less spiritually astute and their memories and lifespans have decreased. Therefore, Vyāsa descended into this world to put the *Veda* into written form and edit it to make it accessible to modern man. He accomplished this mighty feat by reciting hundreds of thousands of intricate Sanskrit verses without stopping, while they were being written down by Gaṇeśa, his scribe.

Vyāsadeva is credited not only with arranging the *Veda* proper into four distinct works (the *Rg*, *Sāma*, *Yajur*, and *Atharva*), but also with composing many of the Vedic corollaries, including the *Mahābhārata* and the *Śrīmad-*

*Bhāgavatam*, the cream of all Vaiṣṇava texts.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates that Vyāsa felt despondent after compiling the Vedic canon and approached his spiritual preceptor, Nārada, to find out why. Nārada told him that in working through the vast complexity of the *Vedas*, Vyāsa had neglected their very essence: the glorification of the name, fame, form, qualities, and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord. Vyāsa set out at once to fill this gap by writing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which may rightly be considered the pinnacle of the Vedic literary tradition.

Vyāsa, having performed the mammoth task of rendering the *Vedas* into written form and writing the explanatory literature as well, was concerned about the ongoing transmission of these books in an age that shuns spiritual knowledge. Consequently, he taught the four *Vedas* to four disciples: Paila, the *Rg Veda*; Vaiśampāyana, the *Yajur Veda*; Jaimini, the *Sāma Veda*; and Sumantu, the *Atharva Veda*. He also taught the *Itihāsa-Purāṇa* literature (histories) to Romaharṣaṇa Sūta and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Vyāsa’s son and the first person to publicly recite the *Bhāgavatam*. All these

*At right: The sage Nārada, who can travel through space at will,  
arrives at the hermitage of Vyāsadeva, the compiler of the Vedas.*

Painting by Dhṛti Devi Dāsī





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## As a preeminent teacher of Vedic knowledge, Vyāsadeva is considered the original guru.

• • •

stalwart devotees of the Lord became expert in their respective *Vedas* and transmitted the knowledge to their many disciples. In this way, the message was passed down from master to disciple in disciplic succession.

### VYĀSA'S QUALIFICATIONS

From the Vedic literature we learn of Vyāsadeva's extraordinary qualifications. He is identified throughout the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas* as Bhagavān, or the Supreme Person, and sometimes He is called an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says that of sages He is Vyāsa (10.37), and Arjuna cites Vyāsa as an authority on the identity of Kṛṣṇa (10.13).

Śrīla Prabhupāda resolves the possible confusion regarding Vyāsa's identity: Vyāsa is God only in the sense of being a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, an eternally liberated *jīva* (a soul like you or I, not the Supreme Lord) particularly empowered with an opulence of God.

In both the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*, Vyāsa is depicted as (1) a *ṛṣi*, or "seer," (2) a *ṛtvij*, or "priest," (3) a *tapasvīn*, or "ascetic," (4) a *yogin*, or "mystic," and finally as (5) a guru.

The *Purāṇas* and the *Mahābhārata* relate examples of Vyāsa's ability to see the future. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.4.16-33) asserts that he foresaw the oncoming Kali-yuga, with its attendant degradation.

Throughout the *Itihāsa-Purāṇa* literature Vyāsa is repeatedly referred to as a *ṛtvij*, or "priest." In the *Mahābhārata*, Vyāsa performed major Vedic rituals for the Pāṇḍavas; at both the Rājasūya sacrifice and the Aśvamedha sacrifice, Vyāsa was the priest in charge.

The *Mahābhārata* depicts Vyāsa as the paragon of asceticism. He displays many mystic powers—including his supernatural knowledge of past, present, and future—said to be the result of

his penances and austerities. He is able to appear and disappear at will, and to award boons and dispense curses.

### THE ORIGINAL GURU

As a preeminent teacher of Vedic knowledge, Vyāsadeva is considered the original guru. According to the *Mahābhārata*, he was known as the guru for those with whom he shared Vedic knowledge—Paila, Jaimini, Vaiśampāyana, Sumantu, Romaharṣaṇa Sūta, Śukadeva, among others, all of whom refer to him as "the guru." Vyāsa had an informal guru relationship with the five Pāṇḍava princes, who knew him as their "well-wishing advisor" (*mantri priyahitah*). Throughout the Vedic corollaries, Vyāsa acts as the perfect guru, giving spiritual instructions to many great personalities who appear in those texts. It was he who impregnated the message of the *Bhāgavatam* into the heart of Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Prabhupāda refers to Vyāsadeva as "the original spiritual preceptor for all mankind." In Vyāsa's honor, the annual festival celebrated by Vaiṣṇavas on the day of their spiritual master's birth anniversary is known as Vyāsa-pūjā Day. The bona fide guru is the representative of Vyāsa, the perfect guru.

In addition, Vyāsa is considered by tradition to be one of the seven *cirañ-jīvas*, or deathless persons. (The others are Aśvathāmā, Bali, Hanumān, Vibhiṣaṇa, Kṛpā, and Paraśurāma). And it is said that even today spiritual seekers of extremely good merit can find him in his cave in the Himalayas. ☀

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# ELUSIVE SECURITY

*He discovered he'd never find security  
in a world he'd one day have to leave behind.*

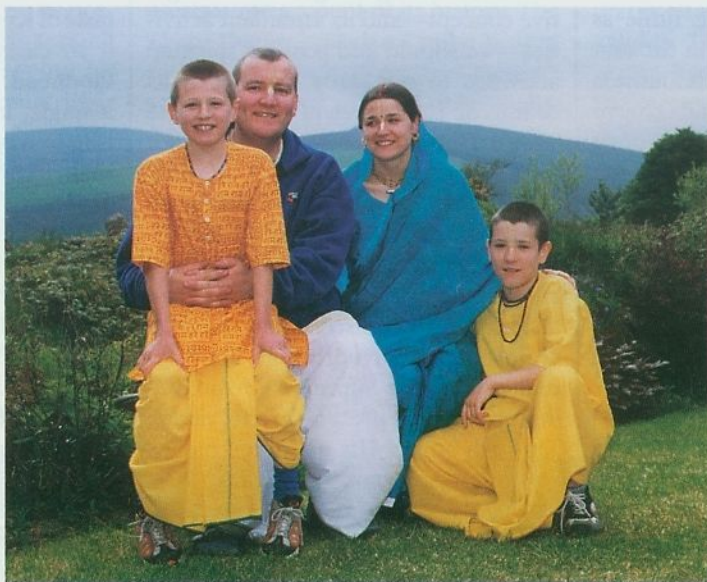
by Praghoṣa Dāsa

**F**OR MY FIRST twelve years, my mother's love and protection were freely available to me. Then she became ill and within a few months passed away. Dealing with her death was the most traumatic experience of my life. After my mother died I endured repeated nightmares, psychic disturbances, and a general feeling of emotional chaos.

During the first three weeks of this turmoil, I slept downstairs because I was afraid to go upstairs after dark. Then one day I suddenly felt it was safe to return to my bedroom to sleep. A few hours later, in the dead of night I woke to see a figure sitting at the end of my bed. It was my mother.

"Everything is okay now, Paul," she said. "I've sorted it all out for you."

While this event solved my immediate emotional crisis, before long I again felt the need for love and protection. During my teenage years I tried to satisfy that need with sex, drugs,



*Praghoṣa Dāsa with his wife, Goloka Devī Dāsī, and their sons, Pāñcajanya (left) and Saṅkarṣaṇa.*

and rock 'n' roll. As I entered my early twenties, that approach to life grew dry. I could see that real happiness, love, and protection can't be achieved by such a fly-by-night approach. I would have to seek out a less shallow method.

My first instinct was to find a girl! I could settle down with, raise a family, and see if that would bring me the

satisfaction and stability I craved. That proved a more difficult task than I'd thought. I found myself in a steady relationship, but after three years or so I discovered I wasn't the only one in my partner's life. My avenue to wedded bliss quickly turned into a cul-de-sac.

During this period of my life I worked as a reporter on a local newspaper. I began to take an interest in what could be loosely termed alternative living. I gave up eating meat. I figured that my quest for happiness had a better chance of success if I were to show

more consideration to others, including animals. I visited many vegetarian restaurants, one of which was run by devotees of Kṛṣṇa. It became a regular haunt of mine, primarily because the food there was far and away better than any other vegetarian restaurant I had come across.

Gradually I got to know some of the people at the restaurant and read

# *Sixteen years later, my lifelong search is over, but I have to be honest and say that I still haven't achieved my goal.*

• • •

a few books about Kṛṣṇa philosophy. I was struck to learn that no matter how hard we try, or how successful we are, we can find only limited happiness and security in this world. The reason for this is logical: eventually we have to leave it all behind. Unlimited and continuous happiness cannot be found here. As spiritual beings in the material world, we are like fish out of water. As long as we stay here, we'll continue to suffer the pain and ignominy of having to leave our bodies.

This was all quite a revelation for me. All my life I had been searching for happiness and security, and now I was reading how my search was futile as long as it was taking place in the material world. But Kṛṣṇa consciousness was showing me where I could achieve my lifelong goal. While the break-up of my relationship was painful, it gave me the impetus to try to reach for the goal of developing myself spiritually and securing lasting happiness.

I read in the *Bhagavad-gītā* about the different categories of people who seek out a more spiritual way of life. One such category is the distressed. I identified at once with this description and thought of all the times in my life when distress or anxiety had become prominent. These difficult times would inevitably evoke a real soul-searching mood. During these times I would beg for relief, without knowing from whom I was begging or how to practically achieve that relief. Like most people, the only solution I could rely on was time. But that meant a prolonged period of suffering.

## GETTING SERIOUS

And so it was that I started on my spiritual sojourn. My first step was to find some guidance. I decided to ask the Kṛṣṇa people who had introduced

me to the *Bhagavad-gītā* and given me the taste for spiritual subjects. I was impressed that the Kṛṣṇa conscious literature has a storied history and has guided sages for thousands of years.

What the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees told me was consistent with what I had read in *Bhagavad-gītā*. First, one in search of spiritual enlightenment should, as far as possible, desist from activities that reinforce material concepts. Chief among these is our erroneous understanding that we are the body, the outward material covering, as opposed to the spirit soul dwelling within. Second, besides getting rid of that negative concept—and its attendant activities—we should add positive spiritual activities to our daily lives, such as calling on the names of the Absolute Truth. This process is, of course, not a new phenomenon. Many spiritual traditions recommend calling on God's names. According to *Bhagavad-gītā* and the Vedic understanding, sincerely calling on the names of God allows one to transcend the material atmosphere and enter the spiritual realm. God, the Supreme Person, being absolute is present in His name. Through any of His unlimited names we directly associate with Him.

I decided I'd be foolish not to give this process a go, and so I began chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the all-attractive, most beautiful person, the topmost form of the Supreme. The next two years or so was the most blissful period of my life. Peace, happiness, fulfillment, and security were present in abundance. With this sunshine inside and its warmth flowing through me, I knew I had found something priceless. Without a doubt that initial experience will always live with me, continually reinforcing my belief that this process is genuine and a guaranteed path to eternal happiness.

## THE QUEST GOES ON

Sixteen years later, my lifelong search is over, but I have to be honest and say that I still haven't achieved my goal. I found Kṛṣṇa consciousness priceless, but you don't get priceless items on the cheap. My reluctance to pay means I still have a long way to go. My initial burst of two-year bliss was akin to a special free offer that has long since run out. Now I find that I must be even more sincere in my spiritual practices to avoid diversions to short-term material attractions.

When I first got the intense sweet taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I expected it to carry me all the way back to Godhead. My life, I thought, would be a single, uninterrupted flow of devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Now, after more pauses than I care to remember, things are different.

One change from my early days is that I'm married now. But marriage isn't the distraction I once expected it to be. Goloka, my wife, is a constant source of inspiration to me as she quietly goes about developing her own spiritual life. Her dedication and determination make me feel like an obstacle in her spiritual life, as opposed to the other way around.

We also have two sons, Saṅkarṣaṇa (12) and Pāñcājanya (9). Now, they *are* a distraction! Boys will be boys, and our two can compete with the best of them. Yet when I remember my life at their age, and I see how much they know and how comfortable they are with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I feel so happy to see them benefit from spiritual life. I realize that they are indeed special souls.

I was just a little older than my boys when I lost my mother and felt so much insecurity. Now in my wife and children I have found a new security.

While I understand that ultimate security lies in my relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa, my present family provide me with more stability than I have ever experienced, because they all share my devotion to Kṛṣṇa. At the same time I don't expect them to carry me; I must do my part, both spiritually and materially.

Today Goloka and I run a restaurant in Dublin serving Kṛṣṇa-*prasādam*—tasty vegetarian dishes offered first to Kṛṣṇa. I love running the restaurant, perhaps because I first encountered Kṛṣṇa consciousness through such a restaurant. I feel blessed in my spiritual life. Yet I still find myself attracted to such completely non-spiritual things as sport, especially cricket. One can employ some attractions in Lord Kṛṣṇa's

service, but so far I haven't figured out how to play cricket for Kṛṣṇa. Yet because sport is still an attraction for me, it helps me remember that I'm still a novice devotee.

My deep-rooted conviction that I have found a route to eternal happiness can potentially be a disadvantage. While one is still on the chase, still seeking, there is a certain hunger. Once you know you've found what you're looking for, it's easy to grow complacent and falsely secure. Do I now need some pain of another kind to ensure I keep seeking the Lord? Great devotees of Kṛṣṇa sometimes pray that way.

A relationship with the Supreme cannot be stagnant. Shall I one day declare, "I'm saved," and that's that?

No, I will always need to progress. At least now I'm operating from a platform of knowledge. Yet knowing the right path is just the beginning. To think myself saved and hope someone else will arrange for my salvation is yet another illusion. I know what I must do, and I must do it! I must learn to love Kṛṣṇa. Security comes from actively applying absolute knowledge, not burying one's head in the sand of blind faith and hoping for the best.

Perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness may take a few years or even a few lifetimes. But, I hope, nothing will cause me to lose sight of the spiritual process I have been so fortunate to find. As long as I continue to call on the name of Kṛṣṇa, I am secure and confident of Kṛṣṇa's helping hand. ☸

## TANGIBLE PROOF?

(continued from page 32)

accepting the Vedic literature as true is an unacceptable bias. And they think that those without such a predetermined world view are as close as possible to pure objectivity. But in fact, all human beings are subjective and biased, filtering experience through their desires and expectations. Although scholars and scientists may understand their own biases and strive for objectivity, they'll never be fully successful.

Another drawback of empiricism is that we can never know for sure whether our conclusions are correct. In a child's game, one child hides an object while another searches. The searching child is told, "You're closer.

No, now you're farther." But who will tell us whether we have reached the target?

As for Vedic civilization, only the written records, the *Vedas*, can give us an accurate account of its history. The *Vedas* themselves claim to be history rather than mythology, and through several lineages of teachers and disciples, we can know the character and motives of the writers and compilers.

In any case, concrete evidence (such as the ruins at Harappa) of some kind of materially advanced civilization in India thousands of years ago is irrefutable. One can interpret such evidence to support the version of the Vedic literature, but the current followers of the eternal religion (*sanātana-*

*dharma*) described in the Vedic literature don't depend on empirical proof—except in the sense that they feel the benefits of following the Vedic dharma. Their personal experience with the text is enough to convince them of its validity. They also accept them as accurate historical documents because they respect the integrity of previous adherents of Vedic culture, especially the teachers and students who have passed them down through many generations. ☸

*Ūrmilā Devī Dāsi and her family run a school in North Carolina. She is the major author and compiler of Vai-kunṭha Children, a guide to Kṛṣṇa conscious education for children.*

HARE KṚṢṆA, HARE KṚṢṆA  
KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA, HARE HARE  
HARE RĀMA, HARE RĀMA  
RĀMA RĀMA, HARE HARE

PRONUNCIATION: *Ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma* (rhymes with "drama")



Photo by Rainer Wolfsberger

## Curly, Curvy Laḍḍu-Gopāla

THIS FAMOUS childlike form of Lord Kṛṣṇa always holds a *laḍḍu*, a buttery sweetball. *Gopāla* means “protector of cows.”

Kṛṣṇa is the son of a cowherd, and His sweet childhood is adored and revered in India, where devotional shops sell palm-sized statues of Laḍḍu-Gopāla for home altars. Nowadays, however, Indian artisans rarely cast Laḍḍu-Gopāla in as fine a form as this curly, curvy bronze, done in Orissa around 1775. It rests in the Rietberg Museum in Zurich, Switzerland, where I obtained this postcard.

This work of art was inspired by Laḍḍu-Gopāla’s babyhood, but when Kṛṣṇa is a few years older, He eats with His friends and enacts more pastimes with *laḍḍus*. Kṛṣṇa’s friend Madhumaṅgala, a humorous son of a priest (*brāhmaṇa*), jokes with his friends by acting greedy. Sometimes he eats with the cowherd boys, and he eats more than anyone else, especially *laḍḍus*, his favorite candy.

Once, after eating more *laḍḍus* than anyone else, Madhumaṅgala told Kṛṣṇa, “If You give me one more *laḍḍu*, I will give You my blessings

so that Your girlfriend Rādhārāṇī will be very much pleased with You.”

The *brāhmaṇas* are supposed to give blessings to the farmers and merchants, so the *brāhmaṇa* boy was right in giving blessings to Kṛṣṇa. Pleased by His friend’s blessings, Kṛṣṇa supplied him with more and more *laḍḍus*. Madhumaṅgala’s joking with Kṛṣṇa in pure friendship is an example of fraternal devotion, whereas Laḍḍu-Gopāla’s babyhood inspires parental love.

Laḍḍu-Gopāla is not a mythic figure or merely a cultural icon, but the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Knowing this in truth awakens our spiritual consciousness. Scriptures recommend we chant and hear Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental names and pastimes to awaken our love for Him. Then, when our bodies are finished, our spiritual enjoyment will continue. Our spiritual selves are like Lord Kṛṣṇa’s: eternal forms of bliss and knowledge. And if we reach Kṛṣṇa’s way, one day we may receive a *laḍḍu* from His hand.

—Tattva-vit Dāsa

**FUNERAL** (continued from page 34) that you can sin all you want, then just accept Jesus in the end.

So if Regina didn't make it to heaven, that means, according to the modern Christian doctrine taught in this church, that she has now descended into an abysmal hell to suffer eternally. Not a very comforting thought for Thomas, whose tears continue to stream down his cheeks.

How much I wish I could share with Thomas the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. While his mother most likely didn't go to heaven, she is not eternally damned. She will take a new body and make progress toward her original home in the spiritual world. How do I know?

### THE LORD'S MERCY

During one of our family sessions, she accepted some *prasādam*, food offered to the Lord in love and devotion. As I watched Regina bite into the soft oatmeal raisin cookie, I reflected on how fortunate she was. Food accepted by the Lord becomes spiritualized and has the power to transform the heart of the person eating it. The Vedic literature explains that a person who eats *prasādam* will receive Kṛṣṇa's mercy and have a greater chance of taking a human birth in the next life. This is significant, since there are millions of types of lesser bodies available, many of them more suitable for humans habituated to animalistic life. One who fails to use the human form of life for self realization risks gliding down into lower species of life and temporarily

losing the chance to make spiritual advancement. But simply by taking a little *prasādam*, Regina may well again have the opportunity to start as a human being in her next life. She can continue the spiritual journey she had unknowingly begun.

I wish I could console Thomas with these Vedic truths. But in my role as his therapist, I have to be careful not to transgress his belief system. I can only use the tenets of what he believes to help him get through this difficult time. I can say that his mother is different from the body she left behind, that she is a soul and the soul is eternal. Beyond that I risk doing what would be professionally deemed proselytizing.

In my earlier years, when I distributed *Bhagavad-gītās* to the public, I would preach the Absolute Truth boldly and challenge many lame ideas. These days, while I still have opportunities to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness directly, I often must use a more subtle approach. At my job, I always have *prasādam* cookies. On my office wall my clients see a large colorful picture of smiling Lord Jagannātha. People benefit from seeing Kṛṣṇa's form, taking *prasādam*, and hearing Kṛṣṇa's holy names, even if they don't know the significance of such activities. In Sanskrit this is called *ajñāta-sukṛti*, unknowing devotional service to the Lord. It is a powerful way to engage people in the Lord's service who might otherwise resist or be inimical.

Regina had seen Lord Jagannātha and commented on liking the picture as she accepted *prasādam*. As I look at her lifeless body in the casket, I think

of her good fortune for having unknowingly done these small services in the last months of her life. I remember the story of Ajāmila, a priest who became obsessed with a prostitute and abandoned all spirituality. As he lay dying, a spent old man, Ajāmila called for his small son whose name was Nārāyaṇa, a name for the Supreme Lord. Although Ajāmila was calling his son, the Lord accepted that call as service. He nullified Ajāmila's sins and purified his heart. As a result Ajāmila soon returned to the spiritual kingdom.

Thinking in this way, I squeeze Thomas's hand. He looks at me for the first time that evening. With full conviction I tell Thomas, "Your Mom is going to be fine. The Lord is with her, and He'll always be with her." His eyes brighten as if he believes in the words, and he acknowledges them with a slight nod of his head.

At the end of the service Thomas hugs me and says, "Thanks for being the life of the funeral."

His words seem out of character for him, for they cleverly suggest a profound truth: in reality there is no death for the soul. Perhaps the Lord in his heart was able to communicate these thoughts to Thomas.

Thomas continues to come to therapy and address his feelings of loss and grief. And he continues to eat *prasādam* cookies and see the smiling face of Lord Jagannātha on my wall. ☸

*Arcana-siddhi Devī Dāsī was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives in Baltimore, Maryland, with her husband and son.*

### INSANITY

 (continued from page 43)

It is like a father and his sons. Say there are ten sons. Every one of them has the right to share the property of the father—but as the father gives. Not that I take away the entire property and let my brothers starve. That is not allowed. That is criminal.

Every soul who has come here to the material world intends to get the greatest profit, without considering profit for others. Others may go to hell. "Others—let them go to the slaughterhouse. I must satisfy my tongue." This is the material world.

"No," we advise these fallen souls. "Why are you slaughtering other living entities?"

"I don't care. I want to eat them. That's all."

So we warn, "You will have to pay for that. You cannot put others into difficulty, because God is equally merciful to everyone. Of course, you don't care about God. That is why you whimsically do whatever you like. But by putting others into difficulty, you are putting yourself into difficulty." This is the situation.

*Harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-*

*guṇāḥ*: Without God consciousness, no one has truly good qualities. Everyone is damned, condemned. *Manorathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*: By mere mental speculation one will simply prolong his material existence. That's all.

And this prolonging of our material existence is troublesome. Material existence means just this. For instance, taking a dog body means plunging deeply into the ocean of material existence. It is a standard of suffering. But the dog does not know. Under illusion he is thinking, "I am very happy." Similarly, everyone is thinking,

"I am very happy," but everyone is in a condemned condition.

Take the pig. He is eating stool, living in a filthy place. But he is getting fat, because he is thinking he is very happy. This is called illusion. You are thinking, "Oh, what a nasty condition. This animal is eating stool and living in a filthy place." But he is thinking he is very happy. Unless he thinks like that, he cannot live in that condition. Again, this is called illusion. He does not know what is the actual, high standard of happiness.

**Disciple:** The highest standard of happiness, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is simply to be in your association.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Back to home, back to Godhead. That's all. This is the highest standard of happiness. We are trying to take everyone to that place. *Yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramaṁ mama:* Once having returned to Kṛṣṇa's supreme abode, we never return to this miserable material world.

[Now continuing the discussion in a car en route to ISKCON's Los Angeles center.] The so-called scientists are taking the effect, the material body, as the cause. And they are taking the cause, the living spirit, as the effect of the material body. That is illusion.

Actually, the soul has nothing at all to do with the material world, but according to his mentality, he is creating certain material conditions. For instance, I don't require liquor, but if I want to be intoxicated, then liquor will be present.

**Disciple:** So I am accustomed to think the material body is the cause of my existence. Really, though, I am conditioning myself to accept material bodies, which I don't at all need.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Yes. As soon as I condition myself to leave Kṛṣṇa's spiritual abode, I create an environment that is material. So these so-called scientists have no eyes to see the spirit. They take the material condition as the cause of the spirit. And when they find that in spite of the presence of these material chemicals, the living person has passed away, they are bewildered. They say, "Yes, we are trying to improve our understanding." But they will never find a way to put the living person back into the dead body.

The body was dependent on the life. The life was not dependent on the body. For instance, let us say that some master is living with many servants. When he passes away, the servants also go away.

But you cannot say, "He was living because the servants were there." That you cannot say.

**Disciple:** Because the soul is not depending on any material situation. Rather, the material situation depends on the soul.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. The master has gone away. Therefore, since his servants can no longer serve him, they have dispersed. But if you are a rascal scientist, you say, "Because the servants were there, the master was existing. Now that the servants have left him, he has passed away." By simple logic, you cannot speak like that.

On the other hand, no matter how lavish our material situation, we are not independent. For instance, no matter how opulent our car, we are not independent. We are dependent on the government's traffic laws. Why the red light? The red light reminds us that we are not independent. We are under control.

**Disciple:** Actually, we are controlled at every step.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Every step.

**Disciple:** Also, Śrīla Prabhupāda, aside from the traffic laws bearing down on us, in an instant any one of these other cars could crash into us.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. As soon as you transgress the controlling law of nature, you'll be smashed. There is nature's control, and as soon as you go against nature, you are finished.

**Disciple:** Śrīla Prabhupāda, is it true that your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, called all these so-called scientific authorities *boka*?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. He spoke of all these materialistically minded persons as *boka*, or fools. So I simply repeat his word. *Boka*. Another meaning of *boka* is "insane." These so-called scientific authorities are all insane. Anyone who has no clear knowledge about "What is the aim of life?" "What is God?" "What is my relationship with God?"—whatever he is doing is defeat. That we see in practical, everyday life. So many scientists, so many philosophers, so many politicians are attempting to bring about a better condition in the world, but they are all failures. They are working in the dark. They do not know anything. One insane fool is trying to surpass another insane fool. ❀

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# Gatherings

The people listed here hold Kṛṣṇa conscious gatherings regularly in their homes—or they'd like to start. You're invited. Just give a call to find out when and where. If you hold Kṛṣṇa conscious gatherings and you'd like to be added to the list, please send your name, city, and phone number to Gatherings, BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA.

## USA

**CALIFORNIA:** To find out about programs in **Anaheim Hills, Buena Park, Corona, Cerritos, Diamond Bar, Granada Hills, Laguna Niguel, Long Beach, Redlands, Santa Ana, Simi Valley**, and other southern California locations, call Svayambhuva Dāsa at (310) 837-2430. **Burlingame** — Vaiṣeṣika Dāsa & Nirākula Devi Dāsi, (650) 344-2446; **Ojai** — Māyeshvara Dāsa & Urvaṣi Devi Dāsi (William & Joan Roberts), (805) 640-0405; **Penn Valley** — Rick & Judy Gross, (530) 432-0854; **Placentia** — Sri Radha Raman Temple, (714) 996-7262; **Redwood Valley** — Prasanna Yoga Ashram (Īkṣvāku Dāsa), (707) 485-5592; **San Jose/ Santa Cruz** — Akrūranātha Dāsa & Jagarīni Devi Dāsi, (408) 353-9099; **Santa Rosa** — Jagannātha Purī Dāsa & Tripurārī Devi Dāsi, Bus. phone: (707) 526-7211; **South Central Los Angeles** — Kṛṣṇa Bhavana Dāsa, (213) 295-1517

**FLORIDA:** **Cocoa Beach** — Bhāgavata Dharma Dāsa & Śyāmā Devi Dāsi, (407) 633-7664; **Coral Springs** — Institute for Gaudiya Vaishnavism, (954) 345-3456; **Orlando** — Raghunātha Purī Dāsa (Ron Jermakian), (407) 291-3069; ISKCON Sunday Program, Shanti Mandir, [call Dīpa: (407) 788-7009]; **Tampa** — Kṛṣṇa Mandir, (813) 273-8744; **West Palm Beach** — Śreṣṭha Devi Dāsi, (561) 712-8470

**GEORGIA:** **Athens** — Guru-Gauranga Hare Krishna Center, (706) 353-8180

**HAWAII:** **Waimanalo Bay** — Above Heaven's Gate, (808) 259-5429

**ILLINOIS:** **Dekalb** — ISKCON Youth Ministry, Manu Dāsa & Jaya Rādhe Devi Dāsi, (815) 754-4563

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**IOWA:** **Iowa City** — Dan & Sylvia Lindberg, (319) 339-7768

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**MARYLAND:** **Baltimore** — Dr. Jagdish & Kamud Patel (Jaya Gaura-sundara & Kaumodaki Devi Dāsi), (410) 788-5947; **Potomac** — Devaprastha Dāsa & Padmamālīnī Dāsi, (301) 299-1326; **Silver Spring** — Mr. & Mrs. Sankhla & Jāhnavī Devi Dāsi, (301) 236-0564; Anuttama Dāsa & Rāma Tulasi Dāsi, (301) 570-6422

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**TENNESSEE:** **Nashville** — Nitāi Gaurasundara Dāsa (Dr. Ravi Singh), (615) 896-3425

**VIRGINIA:** **Charlottesville** — The Bhaktivedanta Center, Amitācāra Dāsa & Māyāpriyā Devi Dāsi, (804) 823-8223

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**FRANCE:** **Paris** — Centre Culturel Hare Krishna, (01) 40469523

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**UNITED KINGDOM:** Regular gatherings take place in more than twenty cities. To find the one nearest you, or for help in starting one, contact Bhaktivedanta Books Ltd., Reader Services Dept., P.O. Box 324, Borehamwood, Herts., WD6 1NB. Phone: (0181) 905-1244

\*New or revised listing.

# CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. Consult your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for the exact dates for your area.

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

## Month of Hrṣīkeśa

(August 27–September 25)

### SEPTEMBER

3—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, appearance anniversary of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Fasting till midnight, followed by a break-fast of Ekādaśī prasādam (no grains or beans). Feasting tomorrow. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for a schedule of events.

4—Appearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

6—Annadā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

15—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Śrīla Advaita Ācārya.

18—Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī, appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

21—Parśvā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans. Fasting till noon

for the appearance of Lord Vāmanadeva (tomorrow).

22—Śrī Vāmana-dvādaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Vāmanadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as a dwarf brāhmaṇa. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

23—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, father of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura (Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual master), and a pioneer in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English.

24—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, foremost teacher of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

25—Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's accepting *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life. Third month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from milk).

## Month of Padmanābha

(September 26–October 24)

### OCTOBER

1—Anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in the United States.

5—Indirā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

20—Rāmacandra Vijayotsava, the anniversary of Lord Rāmacandra's victory over the demon Rāvaṇa. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhvācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the thirteenth century.

21—Pāśāṅkuśā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

22—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Go-

svāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, great associates and followers of Lord Caitanya.

24—Śrī Kṛṣṇa Śaradīyā Rāsayātrā. Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Murāri Gupta, an associate of Lord Caitanya. Beginning of Dāmodara-vrata. Offering lamps for one month. Also, the fourth month of Cāturmāsya begins (fasting from *ūrad dāl*).

## Month of Dāmodara

(October 25–November 23)

29—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

### NOVEMBER

4—Ramā Ekādaśī. Fasting from grains and beans.

8—Diwali, the festival of illuminating Kṛṣṇa's temples with lamps. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

9—Govardhana Pūjā, the festival commemorating the worship of Govardhana Hill by the residents of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa's lifting the hill. Call your local Hare Kṛṣṇa temple for details.

12—Disappearance anniversary of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Devotees observe this day with personal remembrances of Śrīla Prabhupāda, readings from his biography, and fasting till noon, followed by feasting.

16—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a great follower of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

# The International Society for Krishna Consciousness

# CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Founder-Ācārya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

## INDIA

- Agartala, Tripura** — Assam-Agartala Rd., Banamalipur, 799 001
- Ahmedabad, Gujarat** — Satellite Rd., Gandhinagar Highway Crossing, Ahmedabad 380 054/  
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- Hyderabad, A.P.** — Hare Krishna Land, Nampally Station Rd., 500 001/  
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- Imphal, Manipur** — Hare Krishna Land, Airport Rd., 795 001/ Tel. (0385) 221587
- Indore, Madhya Pradesh** — 101 Chetak Arch, 7 MG Road, Indore/ Tel. (0731) 529665
- Jaipur, Rajasthan** — AB-95/96 Chanakya Marg, Nirman Nagar, 302019/ Tel. (0141) 399650 or 392437/ Fax: (0141) 360273/ E-mail: iskcon@jp1.vsnl.net.in
- Katra, Jammu and Kashmir** — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Kalka Mata Mandir, Katra (Vashnov Mata) 182 101/ Tel. (01991) 33047
- ◆ **Kurukshetra, Haryana** — 369 Gudi Muhalla, Main Bazaar, 132 118/ Tel. (01744) 22806 or 23529
- Lucknow, U.P.** — 1 Ashok Nagar, Guru Govind Singh Marg, 226 018
- Madras** — (see Chennai)
- ◆ **Madurai, Tamil Nadu** — 32 Chellatthamman Koil St. (Near Simmakal), Madurai 625 001/  
Tel. (0452) 627565
- **Mangalore, Karnataka** — Hare Krishna Center (ISKCON), Hillgrove (R), Lady Hill, Chilimbi, Mangalore 6/ Tel. (0824) 450021 or 542626
- ◆ **Mayapur, W. Bengal** — Shree Mayapur Chandrodya Mandir, Shree Mayapur Dham, Dist. Nadia (mail: P.O. Box 10279, Ballyganj, Calcutta 700 019)/ Tel. (03472) 45239, 45240, or 45233/ Fax: (03472) 45238/ E-mail: mayapur.chandrodya@bbs.se
- Moirang, Manipur** — Nongban Ingkhon, Tidim Rd./ Tel. 795133
- ◆ **Mumbai, Maharashtra (Bombay)** — Hare Krishna Land, Juhu 400 049/ Tel. (022) 620-6860/  
Fax: (022) 620-5214/ E-mail: parijata@pronto.bbs.se
- **Mumbai, Maharashtra** — 7 K. M. Munshi Marg, Chowpatty, 400 007/ Tel. (022) 369-7728/  
Fax: (022) 367-7941/ E-mail: radha.krsna.rns@bbs.se
- Mumbai, Maharashtra** — Shrusthi Complex, Mira Rd. (E), opposite Royal College, Thane, 401 107/ Tel. (022) 881-7795 or -7796/ Fax: (022) 811-8875
- Nagpur, Maharashtra** — Sri Sri Radha Gopinath Mandir, Plot No 1, Abhayankar Nagar Petrol Pump, Abhayankar Nagar, 440 010/ Tel. (0712) 224180 or 224787
- New Delhi** — Sant Nagar Main Rd. (Garhi), behind Nehru Place Complex (mail: P. O. Box 7061), 110 065/ Tel. (011) 623-5133/ Fax: (011) 643-3540 (Attn: ISKCON)/  
E-mail: ram.nam.gkg@bbs.se
- New Delhi** — 14/63, Punjabi Bagh, 110 026/ Tel. (011) 541-0782
- Pandharpur, Maharashtra** — Hare Krishna Ashram (across Chandrabhaga River), Dist. Sholapur, 413 304/ Tel. (0218) 623473
- Patna, Bihar** — Rajendra Nagar Rd. No. 12, 800 016/ Tel. (0612) 50765
- Pune, Maharashtra** — 4 Tarapur Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. (0212) 667259
- Puri, Orissa** — Bhakti Kutli, Swargadwar, Puri/ Tel. (06752) 23740
- Secunderabad, A.P.** — 27 St. John's Rd., 500 026/ Tel. (040) 780-5232/ Fax: (040) 814021/

E-mail: sahadeva.brs@bbs.se

- Silchar, Assam** — Ambikapatti, Silchar, Cachar Dist., 788 004
- Siliguri, W. Bengal** — Gitalpara, 734 406/ Tel. (0353) 426619/ Fax: (0353) 526130/  
E-mail: iskcon@dte.vsnl.net.in
- Sri Rangam, Tamil Nadu** — 16A Thiruvadi St., Trichy, 620 006/ Tel. (0431) 433945
- Surat, Gujarat** — Rander Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (0261) 685516 or 685891
- Surat, Gujarat** — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P.O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (0261) 667075
- Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), Kerala** — T.C. 224/1485, WC Hospital Rd., Thycud, 695 014/ Tel. (0471) 328197/ E-mail: sarvaisvarya.jps@bbs.se
- Tirupati, A.P.** — K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (08574) 20114
- Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir** — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Prabhupada Marg, Prabhupada Nagar, Udhampur 182 101/ Tel. (01992) 70298
- Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat** — ISKCON Hare Krishna Land, 338 120/ Tel. (02692) 30796
- Varanasi, U.P.** — Annapurna Nagar, Vidyapith Rd., Varanasi 221 001/ Tel. (0542) 362617
- ★ **Vishakapatnam, A.P.** — ISKCON, Plot 23, d. No. 50-119-3/1, Northern Extension Seethamadhara, Vishakapatnam 530 013/ Tel. (0891) 710748/ E-mail: nitaisevini@hotmail.com
- ◆ **Vrindavana, U.P.** — Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathura Dist., 281 124/ Tel. (0565) 442478 or 442355/ Fax: (0565) 442596/  
E-mail: 105146.1570@compuserve.com; (Gurukula:) vgurukula@bbs.se
- Warangal** — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, Warangal 506007/ Tel. (08712) 26182

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Ahmedabad District, Gujarat** — Hare Krishna Farm, Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
- Assam** — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
- Chamorshi, Maharashtra** — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadchiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (0218) 623473
- Hyderabad, A.P.** — P. O. Dabulpur Village, Medchal Tq., R.R. Dist., 501 401/ Tel. 552924
- Karnataka** — Bhaktivedanta Eco-Village, Nagodi P.O., Vollur Valley, Hosanagar Taluq, Shivmoga District, Karnataka 577 425 (mail: Garuda Guha, Kollur, D.K. District, Karnataka 576 220)
- Mayapur, West Bengal** — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
- Puri, Orissa** — Sipasurubuli Puri, Dist. Puri/ Tel. (06752) 24592 or 24594
- Vrindavana, U.P.** — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura, U.P./ E-mail: vrinda@aol.com

## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

- Calcutta** — Hare Krishna Karma-Free Confectionary, 6 Russel St., Calcutta 700 071

## CANADA

- Calgary, Alberta** — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/  
E-mail: sahadevs@cadvision.com
- Edmonton, Alberta** — 9353 35th Ave., T6E 5R5/ Tel. (403) 439-9999/  
E-mail: jsharma@mail.awinc.com
- Montreal, Quebec** — 1626 Pie IX Boulevard, H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/  
E-mail: iskconmontreal@sprint.ca
- ◆ **Ottawa, Ontario** — 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/  
E-mail: 102623.2417@compuserve.com
- Regina, Saskatchewan** — 1279 Retailack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-1640
- ◆ **Toronto, Ontario** — 243 Ave. Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/  
E-mail: toronto@bbs.se
- ◆ **Vancouver, B.C.** — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/  
Fax: (604) 431-7251; Govinda's Restaurant: (604) 433-2428/ E-mail: jaygo@direct.ca

## RURAL COMMUNITY

- **Ashcroft, B.C.** — Saranagati Dhama (mail: P.O. Box 99, V0K 1A0, attn: Uttama Devi Dasi)/  
Tel. (250) 453-2397/ Fax: (250) 453-2622 [attn: (250) 453-2397]/  
E-mail: devadeva@wkpowlink.com

## U.S.A.

- ◆ **Atlanta, Georgia** — 1287 South Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., 30306/ Tel. (404) 378-9234/  
Fax: (404) 373-3381/ E-mail: 76415.175@compuserve.com
- Austin, Texas** — 807-A E. 30th St., 78705/ Tel. (512) 320-0372/ Fax: (512) 320-0477/  
E-mail: sankarsana@aol.com
- Baltimore, Maryland** — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 744-4069 or 719-6738/  
Tel. & fax: (410) 744-1624
- Berkeley, California** — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ E-mail: berkeley@com.org
- Boise, Idaho** — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/  
E-mail: arun.gupta@hp-boise-omd.om.hp.com
- Boston, Massachusetts** — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/  
Fax: (617) 266-3744/ E-mail: iskboston@aol.com
- Chicago, Illinois** — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/  
E-mail: trvrkm@aol.com

Note for international phone calls: When dialing from outside the country, drop the "0" that begins most city codes (the numbers shown in parentheses).

Exceptions: For Spain, the number to drop is the initial "9," for the CIS, "8." Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). ★ New listing ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining ● Revised listing

# CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

- Columbus, Ohio** — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/  
Fax: (614) 294-0545/ E-mail: malati.acbsp@bbs.se
- ◆ **Dallas, Texas** — 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/  
E-mail: bkkrishnas@aol.com
- ◆ **Denver, Colorado** — 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052/  
E-mail: nmd@com.org
- ◆ **Detroit, Michigan** — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ Fax: (313) 822-3748/  
E-mail: fmansion@flash.net
- Gainesville, Florida** — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ E-mail: krishna@afn.org
- Gurabo, Puerto Rico** — P. O. Box 1338, 00778/ Tel. (787) 737-3917/ E-mail: nrshingha@aol.com
- Hartford, Connecticut** — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/  
E-mail: bhaktirasa@poboxes.com
- ◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii** — 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-3947/ Fax: (808) 595-3433/  
E-mail: iskcon@aloha.net
- Houston, Texas** — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 686-0669/  
E-mail: mbalar@hal-pc.org
- ★ **Kansas City, Missouri** — Rupanuga Vedic College (Men's Seminary), 6309 McGee St., 64113/  
Tel. (816) 361-6167 or (800) 340-5286; Fax: (816) 361-0509; E-mail: rvc@rvc.edu
- ◆ **Laguna Beach, California** — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (714) 494-7029/ Fax: (714) 497-9707/  
E-mail: jagai@rupa.com
- Long Island, New York** — 197 S. Ocean Ave., Freeport, 11520/ Tel. (516) 223-4909/  
E-mail: nimanitai@aol.com
- ◆ **Los Angeles, California** — 3764 Watska Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/  
E-mail: svavaasa.acbsp@bbs.se
- ◆ **Miami, Florida** — 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: P.O. Box 337, Coconut Grove, FL 33233)/  
Tel. (305) 442-7218/ Fax: (305) 444-7145/ E-mail: kesava.swami@bbs.se
- New Orleans, Louisiana** — 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 486-3583/  
E-mail: kmkdas@aol.com
- ◆ **New York, New York** — 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/  
Fax: (718) 875-6127/ E-mail: ramabhadra@aol.com
- New York, New York** — 26 Second Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 420-1130/ E-mail: dayananda@msn.com
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — 41 West Allens Lane, 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/  
Fax: (215) 247-8702/ E-mail: vrndavana@netreach.net
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — 1408 South St., 19148/ Tel. (215) 985-9335/  
E-mail: savecows@aol.com
- Phoenix, Arizona** — 100 South Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (602) 705-4900/  
Fax: (602) 705-4901/ E-mail: 105613.1744@compuserve.com
- **Portland, Oregon** — 36312 SE Douglass Rd., Eagle Creek, 97022/ Tel. (503) 637-3891/  
Fax: (503) 637-3120
- ◆ **St. Louis, Missouri** — 3926 Lindell Boulevard., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085/  
Fax: (314) 535-0672/ E-mail: stl@com.org
- San Diego, California** — 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (619) 483-2500/  
Fax: (619) 483-0941/ E-mail: dmraj@ix.netcom.com
- San Jose** — 2679 New Jersey Ave., 95124/ Tel. (408) 559-3197
- Seattle, Washington** — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Issaquah, 98027/ Tel. (206) 391-3293/  
Fax: (206) 868-8928/ E-mail: haribol@iskcon.net
- Spanish Fork, Utah** — Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/  
Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (801) 798-9121/ E-mail: carudask@burgoyne.com
- Tallahassee, Florida** — 1323 Nylc St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 681-9258/  
E-mail: fr2897@garnet.acns.fsu.edu
- Towaco** — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/  
E-mail: samik-rsi.acbsp@bbs.se
- ◆ **Tucson, Arizona** — 711 E. Blackidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/  
E-mail: 105613.1744@compuserve.com
- **Washington, D.C.** — 1009 Noyes Dr., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910/ Tel. (301) 562-9662/  
Fax: (301) 765-8157/ E-mail: btswami@bbs.net
- Washington, D.C.** — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/  
Fax: (301) 299-5025/ E-mail: potomac@bbs.se

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Alachua, Florida (New Ramana-reti)** — P.O. Box 819, 32616/ Tel. & fax: (904) 462-2017/  
E-mail: alachua@bbs.se
- Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan)** — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or  
799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ E-mail: talavan@datastar.net
- Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill)** — (contact ISKCON Gurabo)
- Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka)** — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/  
Fax: (919) 732-8033/ E-mail: bkgoswami@compuserve.com
- Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindavan)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/  
Tel. (304) 843-4801/ Fax: (304) 854-0023/ E-mail: palaceofgold@juno.com
- Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka)** — Rt. No. 1, Box 146-A, 37359/ Tel. (615) 759-6888/  
Fax: (615) 759-5785/ E-mail: 104400.3353@compuserve.com
- Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 839, 17082/ Tel. & fax: (717) 527-4101/  
E-mail: acyutadas@acsworld.net

## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

- Eugene, Oregon** — Govinda's Vegetarian Buffet, 270 W. 8th St., 97401/ Tel. (503) 686-3531
- Gainesville, Florida** — Balaji Indian Cuisine, 2106 SW 34th St., 32608/ Tel. (352) 378-2955
- San Juan, Puerto Rico** — Gopal, 201B Calle Tetuan, Viejo San Juan, 00901/ Tel. (787) 724-0229

## UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

**Belfast, Northern Ireland** — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 0HE,

Northern Ireland/ Tel. +44 (01232) 620530

- Birmingham, England** — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston, B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (0121) 420-4999
- Bristol, England** — Alberta Cottage, Wraxhall Rd., Nailsea, BS19 1BN/ Tel. +44 (01275) 853788
- Cardiff, Wales** — 18 Greenfield Place, Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan/ Tel. +44 (01222) 831579
- Cork, Ireland** — Highland Cottage, 81, Lower Glanmire Road, Cork City/ Tel. (021) 552976/  
E-mail: cork@bbs.se
- Coventry, England** — Sri Sri Radha Krishna Cultural Centre, Kingfield Rd., Radford, West Midlands (mail: 19 Gloucester St., CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (01203) 552822 or 555420/  
E-mail: haridas.kds@bbs.se
- Glasgow, Scotland** — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire ML11 0ES/  
Tel. +44 (01555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (01555) 894526/  
E-mail: 106225.2716@compuserve.com
- Leicester, England** — 21/21A Thoresby St., North Evington, Leicester LE5 4GU/  
Tel. & fax: +44 (0116) 236-7723/ E-mail: gauranga.sundara@bbs.se
- Liverpool, England** — 114A Bold St., England, Merseyside, L1 4HY/ Tel. +44 (0151) 708-9400 or  
643-8817/ E-mail: iskcon.liverpool.uk@bbs.se
- ◆ **London, England (city)** — 9/10 Soho St., W1V 5DA, England/ Tel. +44 (0171) 437-3662/  
(residential/pujaris/shop): 439-3606/ Fax: +44 (0171) 439-1127; Govinda's Restaurant:  
Tel. +44 (0171) 437-4928; (office): 437-5875/ E-mail: london@bbs.se
- **London, England (country)** — Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts,  
WD2 8EZ, England/ Tel. +44 (01923) 857244/ Fax: +44 (01923) 852896/  
E-mail: bhaktivedanta.manor@bbs.se (For accommodations, e-mail  
accommodation.requests@bbs.se)
- London, England (south)** — 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, London SE25/  
Tel. +44 (0181) 656-4296 or 654-3138
- Manchester, England** — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, Manchester M16 8FT/  
Tel. +44 (0161) 226-4416/ Tel. & fax: +44 (0161) 860-6117/  
E-mail: krishna.dharma@bbs.se
- Newcastle upon Tyne, England** — 304 Westgate Rd., Tyne & Wear, NE4 6BR/  
Tel. +44 (0191) 222-0150
- Plymouth, England** — 5 Erme Park, Ermington, Devon PL2 9LY, England/  
Tel. +44 (01548) 830085
- Romford, England** — 3 Rowan Walk, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 2JA, England/  
Tel. +44 (01708) 454092

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Lisnaskea, Northern Ireland** — Govindadvipa Dhama, ISKCON Inishrath Island, BT92 9GN  
Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh/ Tel. +44 (013657) 21512 or 22682
- London, England** — (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor)

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## ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

- Dublin, Ireland** — Govinda's Restaurant, 4 Augier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (01) 475-0309/  
E-mail: pragosa@connect.ie

## AUSTRALASIA

### AUSTRALIA

- Adelaide** — 227 Henley Beach Rd., Torrensville, SA 5031/ Tel. +61 (08) 8234-1378/  
Fax: (08) 8234-1481/ E-mail: nash0024@finders.edu.au
- Brisbane** — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/  
Tel. +61 (07) 3379-5455/ Fax: +61 (07) 3379-5880/ E-mail: brisbane@bbs.se
- Canberra** — 117 Hawksbury Crescent, Farrer, ACT 2607/ Tel. +61 (02) 6290-1869/  
Fax: +61 (06) 286-4700/ E-mail: adi-p@msn.com
- Melbourne** — 197 Danks St., Albert Park (mail: P.O. Box 125), VIC 3206/  
Tel. +61 (03) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (03) 9690-4093/ E-mail: melbourne@iskcon.net
- Perth** — 144 Railway Parade (mail: P.O. Box 102), Bayswater, WA 6053/ Tel. +61 (08) 9370-  
1552/ Fax: +61 (08) 9272-6636/ E-mail: perth@bbs.se
- Sydney** — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray,  
NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (02) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (02) 9957-1893/  
E-mail: sraduucp@sradhda.dialix.oz.au

## RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Bambra (New Nandagram)** — Oak Hill, Dean's Marsh Rd., Bambra, VIC 3241/  
Tel. +61 (052) 887383/ Fax: +61 (052) 887309
- Millfield, NSW** — New Goloka Farm, Lewis Lane (off Mt. View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock  
[mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock], NSW 2325)/ Tel. +61 (049) 981800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)
- Murwillumbah (New Govardhana)** — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella, via Murwillumbah  
(mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. & fax: +61 (02) 6672-6579 or -3047

## RESTAURANTS

- Adelaide** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 79 Hindley St., SA 5000/ Tel. +61 (08) 8231-5258
- Brisbane** — Govindas, 1st floor, 99 Elizabeth St., QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (07) 3210-0255
- Brisbane** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 190 Brunswick St., Fortitude Valley, QLD/  
Tel. +61 (07) 3854-1016/ E-mail: brisbane@bbs.se
- Melbourne** — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-2933/  
E-mail: crossways@iskcon.net
- Melbourne** — Gopals, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (03) 9650-1578
- Perth** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/  
Tel. +61 (08) 9227-1684/ E-mail: perth@bbs.se

**Sydney** — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 529b King St., Newtown, NSW 2042/  
Tel. +61 (02) 9550-6524

## FIJI

**Labasa** — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912/ E-mail: fiji@btt.se  
**Lautoka** — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 664112/ Fax: +679 663039/  
E-mail: fiji@btt.se  
**Rakiraki** — Rewasa, Rakiraki (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243/ E-mail: fiji@btt.se  
**Suva** — Joyce Place, Off Pilling Rd. Nasinu 7½ miles, Samabula (mail: P.O. Box 3957)/  
Tel. +679 381161/ E-mail: fiji@btt.se

## RESTAURANTS

**Labasa** — Hare Krishna Restaurant, Naseakula Rd./ Tel. +679 811364  
**Lautoka** — Gopal's, Corner of Yasawa St. and Naviti St./ Tel. +679 662990  
**Suva** — Gopal's, 18 Pratt St./ Tel. +679 314154/ E-mail: fiji@btt.se

## NEW ZEALAND

**Christchurch** — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190, Christchurch)/ Tel. +64 (03) 366-5174/  
Fax: +64 (03) 366-1965/ E-mail: iskconch@clear.net.nz  
**Wellington** — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands (mail: P.O. Box 2753)/ Tel. +64 (04) 478-1414

## RURAL COMMUNITY

**Auckland (New Varshan)** — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course  
(mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu, Auckland)/ Tel. +64 (09) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (09) 412-7130

## RESTAURANTS

**Auckland** — Gopal's, Civic House (1st floor), 291 Queen St./ Tel. +64 (09) 303-4885  
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## A Brief Case for Detachment

THE SAGE CĀṆAKYA wrote, “There is no misery like attachment. There is no happiness like detachment.”

I lost my briefcase recently, and although it was a relatively insignificant loss, I felt disappointed and thought about how painful it can be to lose things we value greatly. Attachment often leads to disappointment. Either the object of our attachment doesn't continue to satisfy us, or it doesn't last forever. The things we work so hard to acquire quickly lose their thrill. Our loved ones may let us down, even hurt us deeply—as only those close to us can. Or circumstances separate us from those we love.

The final separator is death. Our own death drags us from everything we're attached to. And the death of a loved one is surely one of life's most painful experiences.

In the material world this kind of suffering, like many others, is inevitable. But we can do something to ease the pain. Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that we must tolerate distress because it's part of life. But Kṛṣṇa doesn't leave Arjuna without support. He tells him that a true understanding of the self and its situation in this world will give him the strength to carry on even when things go against him. Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna that he is not the body but the soul within. The soul has no lasting connection with either the body or anything related to it. Knowing just that can inspire detachment.

Beyond that, Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna the art of transferring attachment from the temporary to the eternal—specifically to Lord

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord Himself. All the attachments we develop in this world are misplaced attachment for Kṛṣṇa. Or, seen another way, everything we're attached to is, in a sense, Kṛṣṇa. Because He creates and pervades everything, all our attachments are to some aspect of His energy.

Yet while Kṛṣṇa and His energy are identical, they're different too. So although attachment to Kṛṣṇa leads to liberation from all suffering, attachment to His material energy binds us to the material world, where we must suffer repeated birth, disease, old age, and death.

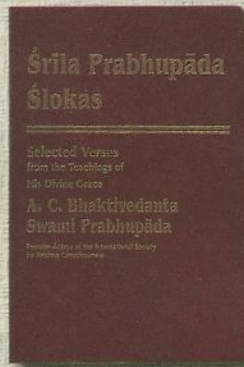
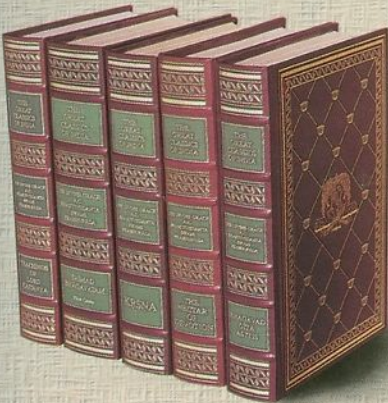
Every transcendentalist knows that attachment to the temporary is the root of all suffering. Various philosophers prescribe different ways to stop all attachment, but because it's part of our original love for Kṛṣṇa, it can never be stopped. The solution to the problem of attachment and the misery it brings is to love Kṛṣṇa. That will fulfill all the desires we're trying to satisfy in other ways.

Loving Kṛṣṇa includes loving things related to Him, especially His devotees. One thing I miss from my briefcase is my collection of hundreds of index cards with scriptural verses on them. One of those verses says, “Attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation.” With or without my briefcase, I can benefit from remembering that.

— *Nāgarāja Dāsa*

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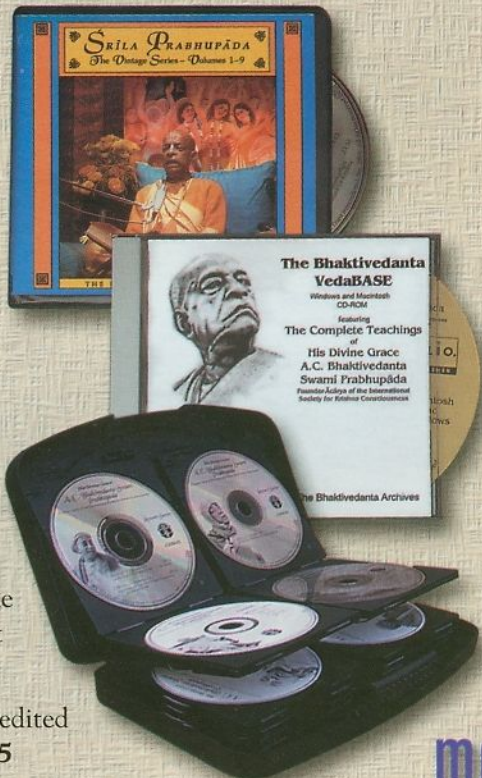
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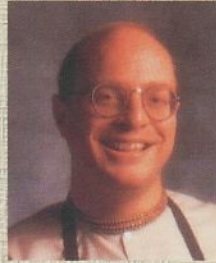
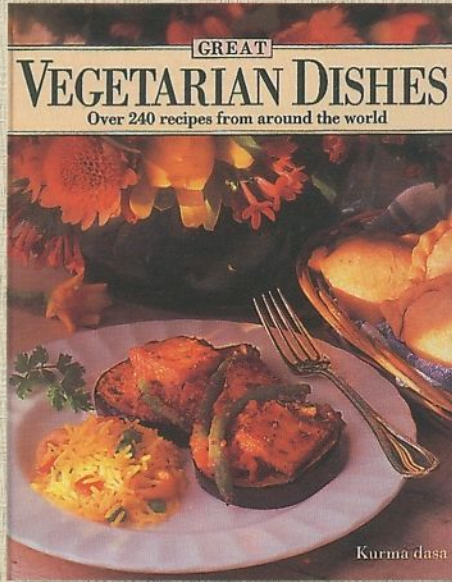
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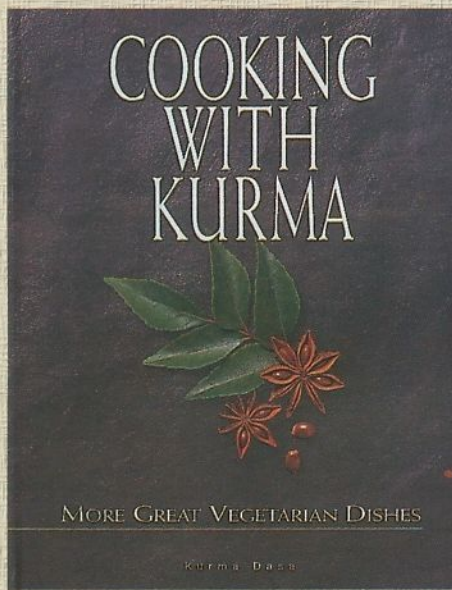
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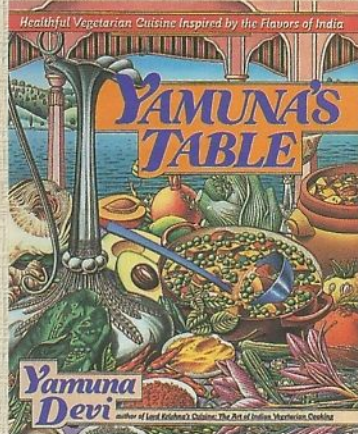
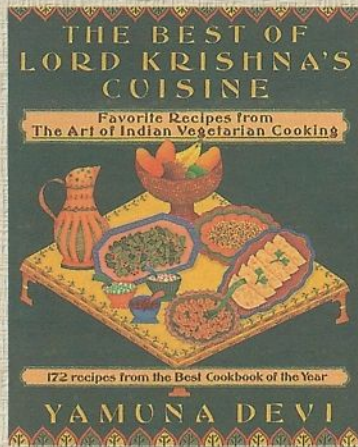
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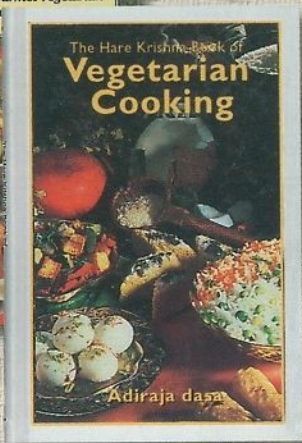
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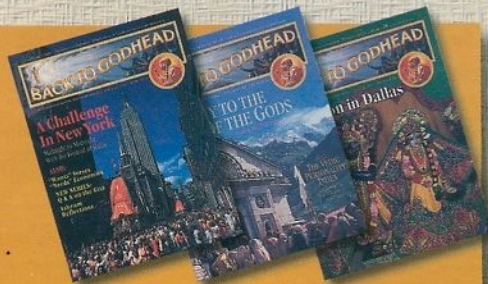
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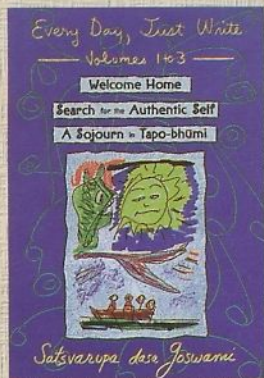
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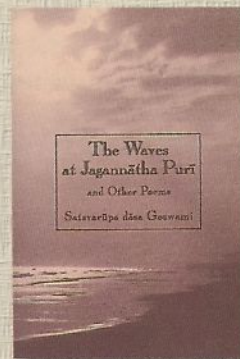
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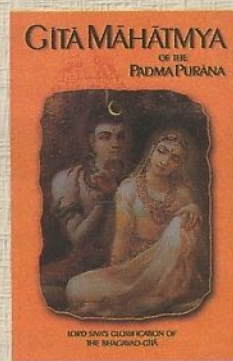


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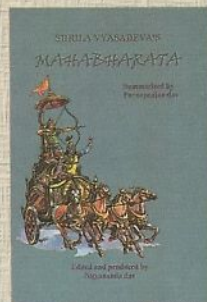
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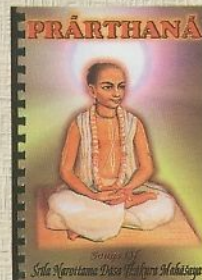
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When one's mind is attached to Kṛṣṇa, one can fulfill the mission of life in one human birth. If one misses this opportunity, one does not know where he is going, how long he will remain in the cycle of birth and death, and when he will achieve the human form of life and the chance to return home, back to Godhead. The most intelligent person, therefore, uses every moment of his life to render loving service to the Lord.

His Divine Grace  
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.9.42, Purport

Men who do not know the principles of devotional service to the Supreme Lord should be known as cows and asses, even if they are expert in technically analyzing Vedic mantras and are adored by world leaders.

*Bṛhaspati-saṁhitā*

The soul's nature is spiritual.  
In the soul's heart is pure love,  
love for Kṛṣṇa alone.  
Now the soul is covered with lust.  
Now that original love for Kṛṣṇa sleeps.  
Chase the lust far away.  
Awaken the spiritual love.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura  
*Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* 1.19.2

We have now plunged into the great nectar-ocean of the transcendental youthful pastimes of Mahārāja Nanda's son, Kṛṣṇa. Of what use to us is the saltwater of impersonal liberation.

Śrī Yādavendra Purī  
*Śrī Padyāvali* 42

Strive, strive only for the association of pure devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Nārada Muni  
*Nārada-bhakti-sūtra* 42

I regard as great even the smallest gift offered by My devotees in pure love, but even great offerings presented by nondevotees do not please Me.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.81.3

The Supreme Lord manifested the material intelligence, senses, mind, and vital air of the living entities so that they could indulge their desires for sense gratification, take repeated births to engage in fruitive activities, become elevated in future lives, and ultimately attain liberation.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.87.2

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